Ko e ngaahi a'usia 'o e nofo 'i lelenga 'a e ongo famili Tonga 'i Aotearoa

The experiences of Tongan families living in precarity in Aotearoa

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Abstract

Precarity is when an individual often finds themselves insecure and uncertain to meet basic necessity on a daily. This relates to the realities of Pacific Peoples despite living in Aotearoa for many decades. For this thesis, I had the privilege to interview two Tongan families that expressed their experiences on precarity, daily. We aim to document and understand the role of work, policy, and wellbeing in the everyday lives of Tongan households. We wanted to document why having a job or two is often not enough to these families to resolve the issues of poverty.

The *Kakala* framework was in cooperate into research as an overarching framework and was treated as the foundational basis between a researcher and a participant. The *Kakala* framework is embedded with Tongan values, and it allows the researchers to use its process during the recruitment stage. Once the process is finalized, we incorporate a Pacific tool that can also be a methodology. This Pacific tool was *talanoa* because it allowed these families to talk freely about their experience in relation to precarity without feeling anxious in a formal setting. In the process of *talanoa* we then included photo-elicitation in one of our interviews where it allows participants to take photos of their interest and asked to elaborate the significant of each photo to precarity. Although utilizing photo-elicitation in Pacific research is rare, its open dialogue for families to use photos to talk about past experiences and tie connections to their current situation.

Our findings suggest that precarity affects the livelihoods of Tongan families in Aotearoa with regards to housing condition living in a cold, moldy and damp home often increases negative impacts on individuals. Furthermore, despite their circumstance both families were still connected and heavily involved in their community and church.

The importance of understanding the complexities of precarity may consider how to inform policies that may provide a better living condition for Tonga People. Thus, providing more research may increase the chance for policies changes in the government to provide a better living for these families.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Yaweh. In the midst of confusion and frustration, your living word gave me peace and has mold me to the person that I am today. Your unconditional love gave me strength in time of distress, to continue writing and working unto your glory.

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Although you all have moved on to the next life, your prayers and teachings has kept me grounded in this journey. My confidence is in Christ that I will see you again in glory.

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It is not ‘I did it’ but We all did it!

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Koe’uhi pe ko ho’o ‘ofa, koe’uhi ko e mo’oni ‘a e ‘Afiona.

Saame 115:1

Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

Psalms 115:1

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FROM THE RISING OF THE SUN TO THE PLACE WHERE IT SETS, THE NAME OF THE LORD IS TO BE PRAISED PSALM 113:3

FAKAMĀLŌ LOTO HOUNGA'IA

TE U HIVA MO FAKAFETA'I HE KO E 'OTUA 'OKU LELEI KIATE AU…

Tapu pea mo e tolu taha'i 'Otua 'okú ne 'afio 'i hotau lotolotongá. Kole ke u hūfanga atu he ngaahi tala fakatapu kotoa pē 'oku tuha mo e paengá ni kae 'atā mu'a mo e ta'e'iloá ni ke fai atu ha fakamālō tu'a.

Ki he'eku fanga kuí, 'Akona, Seluvaia Havili pea pehē kia Semisi mo Lisiua Faupula, neongo kuo mou mama'o atu mei he maama ko ení, 'oku kei hounga kiate au e fakalekesi mo e ngaahi lotu kotoa pē kuo mou faí. Faka'amu ange ne mou si'i 'i heni ke utu 'a e tenga ne mou tō 'i he ngaahi ta'u lahi ka 'oku ou fakafeta'i pē ko 'eku tupu mei ha fanga kuí ngāue mālohi mo tauhi 'Otua ma'u. 'Ofa lahi atu ki Makamaka pea pehē ki Telekava Ua.

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Lisiua Faupula Nathania Havili

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Glossary for Tongan Keywords

Tongan words	English Translation
‘Anga fakatōkilalo	*Humility*
Faka’apa’apa	*Respect*
Fau	*Fibers stripped from the bark*
Fetokoni’aki	*Reciprocity*
Mamahi’i me’a	*Passion/loyalty*
Malie	*Expression of well done*
Mafana	*Warmth*
Luva	*Gifted with heartfelt*
‘Ofa	*Love*
Talanoa	*Talk/tell*
Teu	*Prepare*
Toli	*Picking*
Tui	*Belief/knee*

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter introduces the rationale and purpose of this study. It is vital to provide the reasons on why this study is taking place and how it will contribute to Pacific and Tongan communities in Aotearoa. To start with, the chapter unpacks the concept of neoliberalism and how it may contribute to people experiencing precarity. Following from this, it talks about who Pacific People are and highlighting potential causes that has contributed to why Pacific Peoples are experiencing precarity. Lastly, it gives an overview of study, setting the context and highlighting key objectives with the hope to achieve at the end of our findings.

Chapter two: The methodology section for this thesis. This section will discuss Pacific methodologies that has been used in past Pacific research. One of these methodologies will be *Kakala* where we unpack its general process then discuss how it fits to this research by using examples in each of its stages. Additionally, the chapter also discuss the concept of *talanoa* as a tool that was used to gather the stories of our participants. *Talanoa* was also in cooperate in the process of photo-elicitation where it worked together to congregate the richness of these stories.

Chapter three: The analysis chapter and their experiences of precarity. Within each household, they were given the option to be interviewed as a collective or an individual to speak on behalf of their household. Fortunately, a mother spoke from their household and a father spoke from their household. Each have shared significant impacts of precarity on their lives and their family as a collective. These stories are important as this may help inform any policy changes or developing an effective support for Pacific communities.

Chapter four: Provides a discussion and conclusion based on the narratives of these participants. The focus of this chapter is looking at the differences and similarities of both case studies and their experiences of precarity. Thus, this will emphasize the overall findings

of the study and drawing conclusions if the objectives that was set for this study was achieved.

Neoliberalism and Precarity

To understand notions of precarity, it is important to understand the concept of neoliberalism and its relationship to precarity. The concept of neoliberalism was introduced by Hans Honegger in 1925. Connell (2010) defined neoliberalism broadly as a means of agenda of economic and social transformation under the sign of the free market that has dominated global politics over the past century. It can be viewed as the dominant paradigm for economic theory and policy making (Thorsen & Lie, 2006). It is a political agenda that emphasises minimal democracy and the role of government is limited to the tasks of securing individual property rights and ensuring the smooth functioning of economic markets (Adams et al., 2019). Associated with this political ideology is the shaping of civil society as a collection of individual entities that primarily relate to one another as competitors pursuing their own selfish interests. As such, the idea of neoliberalism illustrates a sense of 'freedom' from constraint and the creation of an entrepreneurial self as key to progress through ongoing development. Such socio-cultural expressions of neoliberalism extend the logic of market-based liberal capitalism to include all aspects of life, including love, family, and civic obligation (Adams et al., 2019). The imperative for *individual* growth and *personal* fulfillment is key to wellbeing and presents a radical abstraction of self from our social responsibilities and material contexts (as above).

However, the experience of removal or abstraction from context has significant impacts that are often less apparent. A person's worth is attributed to their economic contributions to capitalism and ability to achieve neoliberal success. As such, when people fail to meet the markers of neoliberal success, rather than looking at other factors in the system or society and how it may contribute to these failures, they often get the blame or seen

at fault for their choices. Consequently, over time people may normalise these harsh realities and its impact it may have with the people that they are connected to. Thus, neoliberalism continues to affect an individual's life and creates a gap between less affluent and more affluent groups in society. Considering the challenges that Pacific People face in the economic system as well as in the workforce it is important to pay a close attention to the ideology of neoliberalism. As such, it is important to unpack the concept of neoliberalism as some of the current issues in the system or society may relate to what Pacific People face in New Zealand.

The impacts of neoliberalism have influenced the lives of people, particularly those in the minority communities who often find themselves in a precarious state. Näsström and Kalm (2015) defines precarity to consider the material and psychological vulnerability arising from neoliberal economic reforms. As such, the nature of employment has become increasingly precarious which ripples out an impact on people with multiple experiences of marginality (Gaillard et al., 2019). This may lead to labour exploitation, social isolation, housing inequities, and educational inaccessibility – which are all contributors to precarity. For example, some of these jobs may involve hard labour such as working long hours in factories or being out in the cold working in the fields. The impact of employment may be evident in the workforce where individuals are exploited without any consideration where they often feel pressured to work more hours than required for fear of losing their employment. This, combined with being unable to meet high living costs means they must prioritise their employment before other essentials such as their health. As a result, the rising conditions of precarity contributes further to exploitation and compromised citizenship with minimum conditions and benefits, alongside many other negative impacts to people being able to live with dignity (Stringer et al.,2018).

The impact of the global crisis in the 1970s gave impetus to the gathering forces of neoliberalism and its advocacy of free market capitalism in New Zealand (Ongley,2013). With the influence of neoliberalism, it impacted the labour market with production industries withered from global competition and rapid increased unemployment. Precarity links to situations or experiences where people often feel powerless, dependent, insufficient, or uncertain about the future (Groot et al., 2017). With regards to these following definitions, it specifies similarities to those who are in the precariat population in a community who tend to struggle with distributing their income and living in a household with poor conditions. Thus, people often find themselves in these insecure circumstances due to the impacts of neoliberalism and how its effect on communities that are vulnerable. For this thesis, I will focus on Pacific Peoples and their experiences of precarity then direct my attention specifically to Tongan families experiencing precarity in Aotearoa.

Who are Pacific Peoples?

Pacific Peoples or *Pasifika* is a broad term that is used to describe people who have migrated to NZ from Pacific Island nations. Mafile'o and Tapiata (2007) describe the term Pasifika as it can be referred to people's culture of the Pacific Islands, including those with Pacific Islands ancestry who are New Zealand born. These people from the islands can be differentiated based on their religion, language, culture, and geography. According to Statistics NZ (2018) it was reported that Pacific Peoples make up 8% of the entire population of Aotearoa NZ, Pacific People are more heavily populated in Auckland (64%) and/or living in other urban areas across Aotearoa. Pacific People usually refer to the people of Tonga, Samoa, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Tokelau, Niue and Tuvalu (Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005). Our Pacific cultures share many common cultural values, but each Pacific ethnicity has its own unique language and way of living. Gradually over the years, Pacific People started migrating out of their homeland to seek other opportunities for themselves and their families, such as

education and job opportunities. Other reasons for migration are related to climate change with the rapidly rising sea levels that are taking over the lands and homes of people living in their respective Pacific Island nations.

Many Pacific Peoples have migrated and settled in Aotearoa with their family or with the intention to grow their family whilst other Pacific Peoples have continued to migrate and settle in other parts of the world. In particular, the jobs that needed to be filled with workers was in Auckland and so many Pacific People settled here. According to Pacific Auckland (2021), by 2013 Pacific People have settled throughout Auckland with high concentration in South and Central Auckland because it was close to the jobs that required workers. These were low paid jobs, but Pacific People saw an opportunity of employment to work and provide for their families. Tukuitonga (2013), reported South Auckland and Central Auckland as areas to be most likely low decile with low socioeconomic background. Overtime, Pacific People gradually moved and settled in suburbs like Mangere, Otahuhu and Otara where housing was affordable despite the living conditions. This indicates how Pacific People are most likely to experience the harsh reality of poor housing conditions, overcrowding as well as accessing healthy food may be beyond what they can afford. With institutional and economic racism on Pacific People working in low paid jobs, this contributes to healthcare being unaffordable. As a result, Pacific People are most likely to be disadvantaged and have a negative outcome of their health due to not being able to access quality service for their health.

The impact of precarity on employment for Pacific People

Work or being employed can be an important part of one's identity in terms of their self-worth. For others it may simply be a means to an end to pay for daily necessities daily. And for some, work maybe fulfilling and offer pathways to further advancement. For example, for many Pākehā when a person is being asked who they are they often introduce

themselves and then say what they do for a living (Maron & Connell, 2008). While some people may be comfortable to share their occupation, others may feel uncomfortable to share. Feeling inferior or ashamed to share an occupation that is classified as 'low-skilled' or, more accurately, low-waged, can be one of the reasons why people may feel uncomfortable to share. Employment is vital to be able to provide for necessities such as food, shelter, or medical care. With work being the central focus to everything that is needed for an individual to survive, it is important to attend to peoples varying experiences within the workforce. Macky and Boxall (2008) found people with a great sense of empowerment are closely linked with lower fatigue and stress, while higher rewards are associated with better work-life balance. As such those who may feel this sense of empowerment may relate to the amount of control, they have upon their material things while those who may lack a sense of empowerment may feel inferior to others and are more at risk of experiencing higher levels of anxiety or greater worries about their future.

Within a society, there is an unequal distribution of resources and division of power that may depend on your race, ethnicity, socioeconomic or social status (Becares et al., 2013). When there is an unequal distribution of resources given to certain groups in society, it affects their ability to flourish and grow to their full potential. People who are unemployed are more inclined to rely on the state for support and this can be seen through the benefits that's been provided, receiving unequal distribution of resources that may leave them to feel inadequate when compared to those that are more fortunate. According to Walsha and Grey (2019), they reported that one of the reasons Māori People experience inequitable distribution of resources is rooted in structural hierarchies that are associated with colonisation. As such, facing poverty, homelessness and low-quality access to any services for assistance became difficult when Māori People were in desperate need for support. Often some people may assume having a job and earning some sort of income may be sufficient to cater to their

necessities. While some households may be secure in their employment, earning well, others are faced with multiple challenges such as earning minimum wage and trying to best distribute their income to cover rent or mortgage and other bills.

Employment and unemployment are two different concepts that often get misused by people within their own respective ethnic groups. The impacts on employment and unemployment can have a major effect on people's wellbeing. Some of these impacts may be positive where an individual is able to focus on achieving their goals and the negative impacts may include burnout or continuous stress that may lead to lack of rest. Hannif and Lamm (2005) reported how those with unregulated use of employment contracts with less power often find themselves working in unsatisfactory conditions. As such, going into the workforce with no qualification may require the individual to work in that job for a few years to get promoted and receive a pay rise. For example, seasonal workers from overseas, specifically the Pacific Islands, present one example where neoliberalism increases exploitations and precarity. Gibson and colleagues (2008) expressed the most important motives of these seasonal workers are to help their families in the islands, they hope to earn a high wage and improve their English. Often some of these seasonal workers are away on their own and for a period leaving their families behind.

Despite this being an issue to Pacific families in the islands, they often see this as an opportunity to work abroad so they can support their families through sending money or resources back home. Maclellan (2008) highlighted some of the few challenges these seasonal workers face in New Zealand, the poor housing conditions to live in, the lack of work at down times, contracts being set by piece rate (e.g.: per pin or per tree), the contentious issues of deductions. These issues are common and are experienced by seasonal workers as they faced while working for the New Zealand industry. Some of these houses are not installed and during winter season it can get extremely cold which then results in health

problems for these workers. Not only will this impact their health, but it may require them to seek medical care which may be expensive because they are not citizens of the country. In addition, the issues around lack of work at down time which means there is no income coming in, but these workers are still required to pay for their expenses in relation to food and accommodation. However, for some seasonal workers, their contracts were set by piece rate such as per bin or tree for each individual. For example, the individual can work over ten hours and depending how many bins they have filled up, that will be the amount of income they receive. This is problematic because these seasonal workers work long hours and still get below the minimum wage in New Zealand. Moreover, the issues around contentions of deductions alludes to the idea of workers being told they may receive gross pay without clarifying what this means may allow employers to take advantage of these workers. Thus, this can be precarious as it leaves the seasonal workers to be at a vulnerable position because their employers have more control on what desirable amount they prefer.

There are some additional challenges that need to be considered when thinking about Pacific People in the workforce. One of these many challenges may be related to transportation or having to use public transport to get to work. For example, people may not have their own cars and so they would need to take public transportation to work. As such, jobs that consist of shift work or working long hours combined with not having reliable transportation may cause be an issue to get to work. This will require them to wake up a few hours early when all their households are still asleep, get themselves ready and must make their way to a bus stop or the train station. The uncertainty of the weather in New Zealand is never promising especially when it is winter because it can be cold and raining. As such, it increases the likelihood of these workers to developing respiratory illnesses such as influenza or pneumonia and the risk of spreading such illnesses to the rest of the family. Alongside time spent transporting to work, the long work hours require the individual to return home

late when children are asleep and less quality time is spent with families. Equally important, these jobs are paid less considering the long hours they are required to work. Due to the precarious nature of employment and high living costs people have little ability to leave such work and may choose to stay in the job.

Discrimination is one of the many challenges Pacific People face in the work industry. Despite this being prevalent for Pacific People in the workforce, they often find alternative ways to cope rather than speaking up and challenging the idea of discrimination in the workforce. Pacific People tend to feel powerless, unheard, or overlooked by those with authority and so they continue to remain silent in these spaces. Daldy and colleagues (2013) found that for people who experience discrimination in the workplace, there are consequences that relates to the individual's health problems, poorer performance, less trust, and morale but it also increases absenteeism and staff turnover. With the growing evidence around the impact that discrimination has towards one's wellbeing, it is critical to highlight this issue for Pacific People in the workforce. Furthermore, when employees are facing difficult circumstances, it often has a negative effect on their mental health, but they may not want to seek any mental health due to the stigma or shame associated with doing so (Lilo & Cartwright, 2021). Some of these barriers may allude to the idea of discrimination or racism within the workforce. Jansen and Jansen, (2013) defines discrimination in the workplace as someone motivated or intentionally attacking another person physically or verbally either in the workforce or seeking employment.

Regardless of the type of employment, Pacific People in these jobs are experiencing discriminatory treatment may impact their health. Callister and Didham (2008) explains how rates for both full-time and part-time workers are higher for European and Māori than for Pacific People. As such, considering the housing market it continues to increase which leaves Pacific People in a vulnerable state as they are not able to pay rent and pay for other

necessities. Thus, it is important to acknowledge and normalize accessing these mental health services is vital for an individual who may be in despair and is feeling hopeless about their future.

Additionally, understanding the challenges Pacific People face in the workforce, it is important to understand the differences between skilled and unskilled workers because it speaks to inequality of wages despite the number of hours they work and what they do. Gupta and Dutta, (2010) define skilled workers as being employed in sectors like education, health and legal services which produce non-traded services. On the other hand, unskilled workers are defined as those to in labour roles such as the trades, farms or any type of job that requires no formal education. Bres and Campbell (1975) illustrated how unskilled workers have come from their respective Pacific Island nations to work jobs in New Zealand. Terms such as skilled workers versus non-skilled workers perpetuate the idea that workers' rights, pay, and wellbeing should be determined by their level of professional skill. Any job that requires a university degree is determined to be skilled, versus work that does not require formal education is generally categorised as unskilled. A university degree does not immediately make someone more competent than non-university graduates, particularly given the phenomenal expense associated with university entrance and study. In contrast to Pacific People when they arrive in Aotearoa, they filled up the excess number of jobs that were on offer at the time. When there was an economic decline, Pacific Peoples were the first to be targeted as overstayers and deported while migrants from other Western countries were overstaying but making up a lot less of the deportations.

The distinction created by elevating the status of some work over others ultimately makes it harder to criticise the workings of a neoliberal economy that forces people into low-paid work. The hierarchical categorisation of workers based on skill is also entrenched into Aotearoa's immigration system. While the government's immigration system is generally

designed to make it harder to enter the country, the redefinition of what 'skilled' labour is less restrictive when certain low-paid workers who would previously have been considered 'low-skilled' are useful for the economy and therefore must be eligible for employment. The history of migration and labour exploitation between Aotearoa and the Pacific Islands exemplifies the inequities this creates.

One of the challenges they may face is these workers often work long hours but still receive low income regardless of how hard they work; they are often limited to get a pay rise from their employers and organize work action. Considering these long hours working and being away from their family, this may be detrimental to themselves and their family's wellbeing. As Pacific People make up the largest proportion of unpaid work in Aotearoa, the likelihood of one or more people staying to look after children or elders is more likely. This allows others in the household to go work and those who are 'unemployed' may be seen as a huge contribution to these families' ability to bring in money.

Gender roles and its impact in the workforce

Within Tongan communities, the importance of gender roles is prevalent in the way our society is structured. Gender roles are also important to consider in reference to how we understand employment and unemployment, and what is considered as legitimate 'work' in contemporary society. Often the influence of societal pressures, expectations and social norms has created a deficit perception on what is considered legitimate 'work' which is associated with an income and 'work' that is overlooked and undervalued. Blackstone (2003) explained in western societies many believed women to be more nurturing than men, and men were presumed to be leaders and positioned as the heads of their households by providing financially for the family and making crucial decisions. As such, women were expected to engage full time at home, nurturing the kids, maintaining everything in the house

and making sure meals were always on time. Roughan and Taufa (2019) reported how Pacific People are more likely to take on more unpaid work and women are more likely to carry out unpaid activities (such as caregiving for elders, children), which is also reflected how they're in a lower income situation.

As Whiting and Wright (2001) reported women are paid significantly less than men although they have equal opportunities in the workforce. Pacific women face additional issues than just the pay itself in the workforce. For example, they are often seen as less competent, lazy and they are usually treated unfairly by others despite the effort they put into their task that's given to them in their occupation (Haar & Martin, 2021). However, for those who are in the minority group, it will take longer than other ethnic groups to make their way up due to their ethnic background and how people may perceive them in the workforce. This is an ongoing issue for those who are single and working to provide for her family.

The precariat's emergence is grounded in imperialism, which is not reducible to a singular historical event. Neoliberal ideology demonstrates the coloniality of power which continues to dominate ways of living. Inequities within the workplace are experienced differently based on class, ethnicity, and gender (Bell et al., 2017; Rashbrook, 2013). Low pay, casual contracts, insecure employment, and reduced welfare have all contributed towards lower wellbeing outcomes (Groot et al., 2017). As Māori and Pasifika Peoples have high rates in low-paid work, these policies exacerbated the struggles they were already feeling (King, Rua & Hodgettes, 2017; Salesa, 2017).

It is estimated that more women (57.8%) than men (42.2%) occupy the precariat. This overrepresentation of women is suggested by Cochrane and colleagues, to be explained by women's greater prevalence in temporary work and childrearing responsibilities (2017). Within the domain of childrearing, sole parents have reported lower states of overall wellbeing, in comparison to other groups in society (e.g., single peoples, two parent

households) (The treasury, 2018). Most sole parents (up to 83 percent) in New Zealand are women (Stats NZ, 2020) with majority of sole parents identifying as either Māori or Pasifika (Waldegrave et al., 2016).

Additional to women maintaining their household, many experiencing precarious employment must work two or more jobs in order to provide the basic necessities for their everyday living (Rowe & Hong, 2000). In the context of a Tongan community, the role of women is unquestionable as they are to maintain everything in the household as well as being out in the workforce. Filihia (2001) highlighted how Tongan women are also expected to be submissive to their husband and serve within the household. This practice is still evident in contemporary society but with the influence of western culture, Tongan women are starting to go into the workforce. With additional jobs and other responsibilities to play this may increase the stress level of a woman who is trying to make a living as well as nurturing their kids. In relation to households who live in a precarious state, this may increase other issues that contribute to the wellbeing of the family as a whole and for the individual itself. As such, it is not only trying to provide daily but meeting other obligations beyond their household. This could include church obligations, participating and engaging with these activities as well as being able to help in fund raising or tithing every Sunday for their such. Thus, having these many responsibilities, it may require more than what the individuals can afford, and it puts them in a vulnerable position as they are trying their best to make ends meet.

Issues of housing and income

Housing is one of the fundamental aspects that is needed for a human being to flourish, to feel secure and to have a sense of belonging. Without a house that has suitable conditions, it may negatively impact one's wellbeing. Milne and Kearns (1999) highlighted that Pacific Peoples were most likely to experience hardship in getting a house and living in poverty due to the lack of formal educational qualifications. Statistics (2016) reported Fijian

and Samoan People had slightly higher rates of homeownership than other Pacific ethnicities in Aotearoa while Tongan People had the lowest homeownership rates and greatest decline from 2001 till present time. In regard to these findings, this reiterates how Pacific Peoples are most likely to be renting or not being able to afford the housing prices for a suitable home for their family. As such, it is important to consider the type of work most Pacific Peoples are in and the level of income they receive.

Some of the policies around housing may be problematic as it may not accommodate Pacific households. One of the reasons, over the years of Pacific Peoples living in Aotearoa, is mostly to be living in homes with poor conditions or unable to afford a place for their family. Due to the increase in the housing market, this puts Pacific families in a threatening situation as they may not be able to afford these prices and with such living condition. Barker (2019) reported that while increasing property prices benefit owners, they tend to be wealthier, at the expense of renters. With regards to this evidence, it highlights that those who are increasing their prices of property will tend to be richer as those in the minority continue to pay these prices. An example of this existing housing policy is that according to the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 (RTA) required a rental property to be reasonably repaired but sets no standard of habitability (Bierre & Chapman, 2020). However, some landlords did not comply with this policy which was evident that within these dwellings it consists of dampness and heating is not installed which affects the health of people living in these houses. As such, this will impact minority groups particularly Pacific households as they are most likely to be receiving lower incomes than other ethnic groups.

Sundborn, and colleagues (2006) found people who are living in sub-standard housing have a high rate of any infectious disease. This alludes to the realities of Pacific Peoples as they are most likely to be living in this kind of housing condition. Some of these houses are damp and cold but rather these are the only living condition that most Pacific

Peoples could afford. This kind of living conditions increases the chances of Pacific Peoples being negatively impacted. Not only does it impact Pacific families but it may also speak to the current policy about housing and supportive services for those who are most likely to be less fortunate in society. This is important to consider if the change is required to how things are operated by the government and leaders in Pacific communities.

The increasing price of housing and its affordability has impacted those in the minority group and how their living conditions are. Majority of the time Pacific Peoples are at risk of living in a house where it's cold, damp, and moldy due to affordability. This may raise issues to current policy and how it can be changed to accommodate the vulnerable population. As such it may require looking at people's experiences as a tool to use and explain that some of these housing policies are not working for those in the minority group. Bierre and Chapman, (2020) showed using narratives or stories of people can be a powerful tool to advance policy problems and solutions, especially to gather public consent and support. For example, with the current housing policy in Aotearoa, it would be meaningful to look at the lived realities of Pacific Peoples and how their everyday life may look with regards to their housing condition. Experiences within Pacific households will differ depending on their circumstance, but it is important to consider using their stories, their experience to voice out these issues and how some of these policies are not working.

Impacts of Precarity: Overcrowding

As previously mentioned, Pacific Peoples came into Aotearoa for employment opportunities and a better lifestyle for their families. However, in 1976, Pacific Peoples found themselves unwelcomed due to the economy decline in Aotearoa. Pacific Peoples faced racism, discrimination and unfair treatment despite the fact that other western groups were overstaying their visas as well (O'Donnell & Tweddle, 2003). Pacific Peoples were randomly stopped on the streets to check their passports and families were woken at dawn by

authorities to search for overstayers. This event was known as the Dawn Raids, one that grandparents and those that grew up during this time are traumatize and vividly can recall what had taken place (Anae,1997). With Pacific Peoples experiencing what had taken place during the time of Dawn Raids and subsequent policy reform, it has tremendously impacted them economically and political factors have contributed to the poorer experiences of Pacific Peoples across health and wellbeing. Moreover, Pacific Peoples are most likely to live in overcrowded homes, experiencing discrimination and often find themselves living in poverty (Butler et al., 2003). With these experiences of Pacific Peoples, often their stories are hidden from the lived realities of Aotearoa, ignored or their voices are not being heard as they often belong to the minority group.

Socio-economic status is an important determinant of health for Pacific Peoples. Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (2011) reported Pacific Peoples are disproportionately represented in lower socio-economic areas, earn low incomes, and higher levels of unemployment. For example, within a Pacific household, it is normal to consist of multiple generations of grandparents or aunts and uncles. Although this may appear to be normal for a Pacific household, the impacts of overcrowding and mental distress is often overlooked when living in a situation like this. However, living in an overcrowding household may not be by chance rather by force due to socio-economic background, the constant increase in the market for housing and spaces are small to accommodate these families. Pacific Peoples are most likely to live in a housing condition that is moldy, cold and damp with two to three bedrooms for many than ten people in the house. Butler et al., (2003) recorded Pacific Peoples were more likely to have symptoms of asthma, cold and flu due to their living condition. With regards to the number of Pacific families living in one household, this may be problematic as it may worsen their health but would also be putting the health of the younger generation at risk if they continue to be in this living condition. This is not to

blame the fact of these things occurring in Pacific household but to reveal the disparities and lived realities they face daily despite having to work more than one jobs to make a living

Shelter is a fundamental need for humans and if not adequately met, this may negatively impact their health. Paterson et al., (2018) reported a range of socio demographic and social factors may affect the way individuals live in their homes, these factors alone or all may contribute to psychological distress. With these factors, some are often overlooked, and people may not be aware of how it can affect their health long-term. Some Pacific houses, despite the conditions of their home, are not able to move due to the lack of support or affordability to make that decision. Bulter et al., (2003) highlighted Pacific Peoples were more likely than other ethnic groups to have symptoms of asthma, flu and cold. As such, those who are living in a precariat state have a high chance of being in this circumstance where the living conditions are poor and not being able to move due to the cost of renting increasing.

Subsequently, considering the concept of precarity on how it has been defined by previous studies, there are rarely any past studies that have looked at this concept from a Pacific perspective. As such, despite the lack of knowledge on what precarity is for Pacific communities, their realities reflect the disparities in society and some issues are often overlooked for those in the minority groups. Definitions of precarity primarily focus on insecure employment which results in psychological distress. However, this definition may omits miss out the cultural, spiritual, environmental factors that are considered in Pacific communities. These factors are crucial when thinking about precarity as they contribute to some situations where Pacific People often find themselves. Thus, these are some of the things that should be further cogitated when working with Pacific communities in Aotearoa.

Family is one crucial aspect required for an individual to be connected to learn from and develop their skills while growing up. In the western world, the idea of a family may

seem different to how Pacific Peoples may perceive the concept of family. Within the western world, the family structure is predominantly a nuclear family that consists of parents and siblings rather than including grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Allendorf (2013) noted living within a nuclear family has a positive impact on health and wellbeing for one individual. As such, this may be more evident among Western families as it often consists of the parents and siblings only for a particular household. This may be seen as something positive in having a decent size of the family because it would depend on how to cater to their needs, being able to distribute income that is coming into the household to other things such as food, rent, bills and other extracurricular activities. Carter et al., (2005) reported having adequate housing is a fundamental human need that has a significant influence on health and wellbeing. As previously mentioned, this may be relevant when family size is small, resources may be more manageable when it is limited for a household.

Despite the positive impacts of having such a small size family or nuclear family, it may contradict how Pacific Peoples view family structure. Most Pacific families are large due to various reasons. Prior to migrating into Aotearoa, Pacific Peoples were used to living closely to families as it is evident in the Kingdom of Tonga. Families are encouraged to stay together, to raise their children together but it also contributes to communal care. When Pacific Peoples made this move into this foreign land, they continued practicing this within Pacific communities. These reasons may relate to economic reasons, family moving in from the Pacific Island as they often live in first immigrants house for a start before finding a house for their own (McLeod, 2010). For example, the first immigrant often opens their home so that it allows those who are coming in to utilise their home and resources as a start of their living arrangement in Aotearoa.

Providing this sort of support gives shelter for those from the islands to start from and also time to look for jobs to earn and save for their future house. Once things are moving and

these migrants find some type of employment, it is not certain they will contribute to a family that they are currently living in. In some households, these migrants may only worry about their family and usually move out without acknowledging the help and support that was given to them when they arrive in Aotearoa. This may escalate some tensions between families and at some point, conflict due to turning a blind eye from the generosity that was given to them. As such, when tensions occur, and these families are living in a precarious situation, they may not want to admit to their reality causing them to cut ties with other family members that may be able to help them.

When having many people in one household, food may be something to be worried about as it is required to feed everything that is living in that space. While food is important it may depend on the amount of income the household is receiving to disturbed equally so there's enough for food and other bills that are due. According to Cheer et al., (2002) reported how people on low incomes tend to have a high chance of being overweight through the consumption of foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt. As such, when many people are living in one household, the cheapest things to get are usually takeaways or cheap ingredients to make a dish for everyone. With a limited amount of income on their hands, they are not able to purchase healthy food as it may be too much for affordability and may not be enough for everyone to eat. While food may be seen as an important aspect of those living in one household, being in a home with many people with a small size to move around may impact the health and wellbeing of others.

Education: Importance and pathway out of precarity

Education is an important aspect of an individual's life as it may depend on the type of employment and level of income for an individual. Depending on the rate of income the person is earning, it influences what they can access in society to resources. Obtaining formal educational qualifications may not be a way out; rather it ensures the type of employment and

may also allow for mobility in the workplace. In some cases, Pacific People are qualified to be working in these jobs, but they may experience some barrier that may prevent them from being promoted into positions such as management roles or supervisors. Before Pacific People migrating to New Zealand, many envision that moving may provide a better opportunity for their children in regard to education. This then becomes one of their main reasons for bringing their family to New Zealand.

With the hopes and dreams for their children to utilise these opportunities wisely, it is not questioned that all Pacific children will live up to this. Sundborn, et al., (2006) noted education can affect many determinants of health as it indirectly determines occupation and income as it is evident on mothers who are better educated, they are more likely to receive health services for their children, immunization, use of community nurses and early childhood education. This alludes to the idea of having a form of qualification or those who choose to further their education as more likely to have a better outcome in life. Moreover, one of the findings emphasizes how Pacific People migrated to educate because, in Tonga, only those with power and authority can send their children to school overseas, (Anae et al.,2002). This finding supports one of the many reasons Pacific People migrated because it suggests the limited resources to meet people's needs in their homeland.

Theodore, et al., (2018) noted some Pacific People may not be able to complete tertiary or continue onto tertiary studies due to feeling burdened and having to work either full/part-time while trying to study at the same time. Often these issues are prevalent in Pacific communities because when there are obligations to meet some households have limited choice but to have their children work to help out with these obligations. Whilst these children may be working, some choose not to further their studies and would rather work and build their life. These people are most likely to be at a low-paid job, with long hours of heavy

duties. As such, some jobs may promote these children but often some of these Pacific children are exploited in these workforces as they are most likely to be cheap laborers.

Being exploited in these jobs, sometimes these Pacific children are unconscious of these things, yet they continue to show up to work regardless of their circumstance. Others may not be able to see their potential and would rather settle for minimum wage although their income may not be able to satisfy other things at home. An example to emphasise this was when the pandemic had occurred in Aotearoa. With the pandemic occurring, Pacific People were one of the minority groups that were badly impacted as with covid it has exacerbated the over representation of Pacific in many areas such as poor health outcomes. In some cases, there were numerous people who had lost their jobs due to the occurrence of covid. As a result of job loss, this increases the pressure on these particular households, and it may also impact their wellbeing as a whole on a daily basis.

Conceptualising Wellbeing: Western vs Pacific Understandings

Wellbeing is an imperative concept for one's life to comprehend so they are conscious of external factors that may influence the manifestation of one's behaviour. Factors such as culture, environment and way of living may derive various views on understanding what wellbeing may mean in their community. From a western perspective, wellbeing is a state of being happy, a positive feeling that an individual feel internally and can be displayed on their behaviour (Bourne, 2009). Being happy and feeling positive can be due to numerous causes such as achieving one's goal that was set to be accomplished at a certain time, getting married or simply getting a job after being unemployed for a while. Sinha (2011) highlights for an individual existence on earth, the best way to maintain their wellness is to have some sort of balance or equilibrium which hopefully brings them to a state of where they want their wellbeing to be. However, if one's wellbeing is unbalanced or not at equilibrium the

individual may experience some serious issue that may affect them mentally, emotionally, and physically.

For Pacific Peoples, understanding wellbeing and how they may conceptualise wellbeing may differ from a western worldview. Some of these understandings may draw from various Pacific Health and wellbeing models such as Fonofale, Kakala, or Te Vaevae health models. The Fonofale Model was developed from a Samoan perspective which uses a Fale (Samoan house) to illustrate important aspects that holistically relate to one's wellbeing. Including the Pacific Models such as Kakala and The Vaevae, the ideas are quite similar but to a certain extent because these models are from their own specific ethnic background. Although these models provide a fundamental understanding on how Pacific Peoples may define their wellbeing, differences may arise due to certain belief, culture and tradition. As such, wellbeing is important to understand from a Pacific perspective wellbeing is from a holistic perspective rather than just focusing on the individual.

A critique to consider when wellbeing is conceptualized in the west is that it often centers on notions of stability and associated with the acquisition of material success. This may include the position an individual occupies in society, achieving their personal goals and being able to provide for a luxury lifestyle. Through such framing in the west, wellbeing is perceived in a way that is stable, it can operate within an individual or collective and have an objective and subjective influence (Atkinson, 2013). Part of it may be true in relation to the wellbeing of an individual, however, depending on the individual's situation, it may not always be stable and that could be something to consider and consider the root because of it.

Additionally, a critique that may be considered regarding the ideology of wellbeing is that it ignores the cultural aspects of the individual and broader factors that may come into play and are crucial to understand. Considering these critiques of wellbeing, having a broader understanding gives a better indication on what the individual is going through and what type

of help that may benefit them. Notwithstanding the critiques of wellbeing in the west, Pacific People may view or comprehend wellbeing in a way that may be opposite to how it's been understood. Thus, making these references is important to unpack as it relates to everyday living for the individual.

Pacific values are quite similar across cultures with minor differences to their specific ethnicities. These values are perceived as the foundation for raising the next generation of Pacific People living in New Zealand. Some of these values are embedded in most Pacific families, however, there can be some challenges as some Pacific children may not be able to maintain these families. One of these values that are common across Pacific cultures is giving to either community, social gathering, funeral, church functions and families that are still living on the island. Giving could come in various shapes or forms depending on the gathering or function that is occurring. Some may agree to give food, fine mats while the majority of those give money to either help or show a sign of appreciation depending on the context. The form or actions of giving to the extended family can be perceived as either helping or extending generosity but also may become a burden to families who are trying to survive on minimum wage.

Cowley et al., (2004) conveyed from their findings that Pacific People who have reported religious affiliations were strongly associated with these gifts at a general level, to family in New Zealand or Pacific Island and/or their churches. Despite the amount or level of income an individual may have in a Pacific household, there are obligations to be fulfilled as these are part of our values to be carried out within their communities. These obligations become a responsibility that Pacific People often fulfil but can be seen as a burden to some families who are struggling to make ends meet. Depending on individual belief and their circumstance, giving may be seen as a form of generosity and in return as a blessing. Others

may think that giving back to those in the Pacific may be seen as honoring them for paving the way to have an opportunity to migrate to improve a better lifestyle.

Considering these values are vital when thinking about Precarity and the lived experiences of Pacific People in New Zealand. With previous studies that have to define this concept, there may be some limitations if these definitions are to be used to explore Precarity in a Pacific community. One of the limitations of informing western ideologies of Precarity is that it ignores the cultural aspect of Pacific People. Culture is an important foundation for Pacific People as it brings about obligations and responsibilities that are to be maintained across generations. For example, culture consists of shared values and beliefs may influence the way an individual chooses to live their lives in society. These things could include church obligations, the way People serve one another and providing to those who are in need despite the limited means within their families. Milne and Kearns, (1999) contend that homogenizing Pacific Peoples is not only offensive but ignores the value and uniqueness of their diverse cultures, languages as other ethnic groups. This reduces the effectiveness of many analyses by diminishing the importance of cultural variables.

Misconceptions of Christianity and its burden on Pacific families

In the Pacific community, church and faith plays an important role in their everyday lives. Through religion and church, it affects how an individual behave in society and how an individual involves or take responsibilities within the church. Dewes and McColl (2015) found that churches are one of the most important institutions for Pacific Peoples, providing a sense of belonging, a place of social institution to foster and develop their spiritual, cultural beliefs, values and engaging in their traditional practices. This space provides an opportunity for New Zealand born Pacific individual to explore their culture, learn their languages and engage in cultural practices. While this remains an ongoing debate, church can also be a burden to some families, particularly those living in precarity. It is important to note that this

is not to attack a certain denomination or any religion but rather critiquing some practices that people engage in that is beyond imaging. Growing up in a Pacific community, I have witnessed how some churches are far away from the truth, where money becomes the center of why people should be attending church. For example, using the scripture as a way to justify the actions of certain pastors or use as an encouraging message for members to give more to the church promising that the blessings will follow.

When fulfilling the obligations of the church becomes more important than hearing the teachings of bible, this can be dangerous for vulnerable families as it defies the purpose of gathering in the church. This is often evident during the time of *misinale* which is known as the yearly cash donation made by all congregations. All families that are part of the church are called up individually to publicly declare the amount they donate each year. By announcing these amounts for the congregation to know may be somewhat embarrassing for those that do not put in big amounts of cash. It often puts a lot of pressure upon families where they would find loans to meet these expectations to avoid any attentions being drawn to them. *Misinale* contributions can be seen as gifts to God as it plays a part of a continuing relationship between God and the self (Evans,2001). Evidently shown in the Tongan community, this practice has been present over decades and is still active in contemporary society.

The amount that is often given to a yearly *misinale* may depend on the status of the individual within the congregation. As such it is expected for a *faifekau* (pastor) to put in a certain amount, however, people would not say explicitly. If the pastor put in less than the expected amount, this is usually frown upon on and often be seen as shame. With position comes with status as well as reputation to maintain, Tongan families are faced with having to meet the necessities for home as well as to the church. Addon and Besnier (2008) found during festival times, Tongan People are under pressure to obtain money and most of them

are going to pawn shots to either exchange things or get a loan out for these occasions. As such, this is quite normal and sad to see within our Tongan community that they need to seek elsewhere for money to be able to contribute to these church responsibilities. Tongan families who are living in precarity tend to be more at risk of seeking loan or going to the pawn shop to meet these needs and having to contribute to other obligation. With additional pressure this can impact the wellbeing of an individual having to face these pressures of life and providing for their family. As a result, although the church has an important role to play within the Tongan community, it can also be a cause as to why people may experience precarity.

The current study

The current study is located in Aotearoa, South Auckland engaging with these Tongan families. Within the Tongan society, it is structured in a hierarchical way where things are ordered and people play different roles depending on what position they hold. For example, in Tonga, we have a ruling monarchy where there is a king, queen, prince, princesses, the nobles and then the commoners. However, within a Tongan family there is a father who is the head of the family, the mother as well as the children. Women are perceived as 'eiki' or hold a higher status over men when it comes to social structure. In this research, I will be focusing on Tongan household as a single case study to look at their wellbeing and the precariat and how it works in everyday life. The purpose of this research is to document and understand the role of work, policy, and wellbeing in the everyday lives of these Tongan households. Additionally, we will document why having a job or two is often not sufficient to these families to resolve the issues of poverty, looking at various insecurities impact the everyday lives of precariat families with a view to inform an effective response and also enable us to explore how various initiatives address issues of poverty and insecurity that impact the wellbeing of everyday health related practices of Precariat families.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the Fonofale as one of the frameworks that's been used in Pacific research as it upholds some of these Pacific principles and beliefs that these families practice while living in Aotearoa. As well as discussing the importance of these Pacific principles and beliefs, these interviews will be more of an informal conversation or in other words '*Talanoa'*. As such, although questions are designed for the participants to answer, there is flexibility in what questions the participants are comfortable to answer. With these talanoa it fits well with these Tongan families so they do not feel tense when the interview is conducted.

Chapter 2

Methodology

In this chapter, I foreground my analytic approach by detailing a bricoleur research praxis rooted in Pacific ways of being which underpins the research. Specifically, I will discuss for this research a *Kakala* framework as it displays the rich values and beliefs inherent to Tongan ways of being. Pacific methodologies like the *Kakala* framework provide emerging researchers, such as myself, with the strength and opportunity to conceptualize from our own distinctive worldview the richness and dignity of Tongan philosophies, values and practices. It is from this position that we can assert our right to stand and our ability to contribute to knowledge-production. Additionally, this chapter will also look at Pacific methodologies and its role in research as well as using talanoa as a methodology. While using *talanoa,* it is vital to understand the social structure within a Tongan community as it direct the appropriate language to use when conducting a *talanoa* with people. This ensures to maintain the *va* between myself and the families that agreed to be part of this study. Furthermore, I used photo-elicitation in my *talanoa* where it allowed participants to draw deeper from their experience of precarity. Thus, using this methodology provide the richness of these stories and how authentic these experiences are in relation to precarity.

The context for my research

This thesis is located within a broader 3-year, Health Research Council (HRC) of New Zealand funded research project entitled *"Wellbeing and the precariat – How does it work in everyday life?"* The larger project is a collaboration between a team of researchers from Massey, Auckland University of Technology (AUT), Waikato and the University of Auckland. My research design involves an ethnographically-oriented and qualitative case-based exploration of issues of work, income and wellbeing in the everyday lives of two Tongan households recruited through a Tongan church where I am an active member. As such, *Talanoa*

principles informed my research engagements with the two households. My research sits within year one of a broader research project and spans four waves of engagement with the two participating households using a range of enhanced participative interview methods over a two-month period. Here, enhanced interviews involve the use of genograms, photo-elicitation projects, critical incident mapping exercises, income, expenditure mapping, and developing visual representations of personal and relational aspects of wellbeing. These exercises extend the utility of interviews for documenting the insecurities and relationships that shape precariat Tongan families wellbeing in their everyday lives. Underlying this approach is an orientation to social change that is dialogical, grounded in the realities of our complex social system, and is responsive to changes in the environment.

Interview One

Interview one focused primarily on building trust, relationships, security, and housing. In this interview, I utilized genograms and a mapping exercise to gather a basic understanding of significant relationships and housing histories of the whānau. Genograms are visual depictions of family systems and are often used in counseling and research (Rempel et al., 2007). Using genograms is an interactive process and is created collaboratively with the participants (Kuehl, 1995). In a therapeutic setting, a genogram is a helpful way to understand the family dynamics. Similarly, in a research setting, they can be used to understand the support networks of people (Rempel et al., 2007). For the current study, genograms can be used as a culturally appropriate research tool to understand the relational constructs within households amongst participants (Hardy & Laszloffy, 2017).

Interview Two

In interview two, we focused on the employment, income and expenditure of the families. Participants discussed their past and current employment history and used timelines as a conversation starting point. Here I wanted to understand what plans or hopes the

participating families had for the future. In this interview, I was careful when talking about finances as this can be quite a sensitive topic for many precariat families who face stigma and scrutiny. In the next section I outline a *Kakala* framework for engaging with participating families drawing on Tongan cultural practices and values to navigate tensions.

Interview Three

In interview three, the focus was on wellbeing, leisure, services, and food. Like interview one, mapping exercises were used to visualise how participating families navigate interactions with different services. Service mapping can be an effective way to understand interactions between families, services and support systems to identify any points of exploitation or tension (King, et al., 2017). At the end of the interview, I briefly spoke to the participating families about the photo-production exercise to be carried out before interview four. Each family had the option to take up to 10-20 pictures that resonated with the themes occurring across the four interviews with their own devices or share images they already had and we would sit down and *talanoa* about them in the final interview.

Interview Four

The photos participating families provided were utilized as conversation starting points to guide the photo-interviews. This process was primarily directed by them, and I would ask questions and gentle prompts along the way. Finally, I summarized all the genograms, maps, and other drawings from previous interviews and put them into chronological order to form a timeline. In doing so, we completed the circle of getting to know each other, engaging in detailed dialogue, and feedback and closing. In the following section I detail the Pacific methodologies that guided this process and my engagements with the two participating families.

Pacific methodologies and its role in research

There is limited research within the Pacific region as well as research coming out from Pacific communities. As Pacific Peoples bear a disproportionate burden of the issues impacting the precariat, it is important to understand the context of their life and to endeavor to familiarize ourselves with their culture and traditions. It is imperative to acknowledge that more often than not many of the stories and experiences of Pacific Peoples have been told through a Western lens and as such have been exploited in research. This is one of the reasons why considering the importance of Pacific methodologies when working with Pacific Peoples allows Indigenous or Pacific researchers to drawn on our own beliefs, our systems, and our lens when analyzing these stories. Naepi (2019) reported Pacific Peoples experienced colonization and as a result, their knowledge production was disrupted. For example, people who were non-Pacific aimed at research to 'help' Pacific Peoples but often damaged and exploited those who were part of the study. The vulnerability of those within this population was taken for granted and non-Pacific researchers saw it as an opportunity. In some cases, some of these researchers use the knowledge of Pacific Peoples to make money out of it through books, movies, and other forms of material things that may benefit them economically. As such, it has left a lot of mistrust between Pacific Peoples and researchers as they were exploited in a way that has left a scar for more than a decade. Fortunately, over time, Pacific researchers are redefining the stories told about them and developing Pacific methodologies for Pacific communities.

Utilising 'Talanoa' as a methodology

Talanoa is a common methodology that is used in research regarding Pacific Peoples in any area they wish to conduct their research. The concept of *talanoa* comes from two words and it is important to unpack what it means in general. *Tala* relates to notions of informing, telling, relating or commanding others to do something while *noa* means any kind, ordinary, nothing in particular, or purely imaginary or void. Vaioleti (2006) defines *talanoa* at a

superficial level which can refer to a conversation, a talk, an exchange of ideas or thinking, whether formal or informal. As such, without even thinking about the process of how to do a *talanoa*, people tend to exchange ideas and have a meaningful conversation that can also mend a relationship between two or more people. For this thesis, these interviews will be in a *talanoa* structure, where it allows people to be more flexible on how they answer the questions and talk about their experiences. The positive side of using *talanoa* with Tongan People in this form of research is that it allows them to normalize the whole process while being present in their house. Those who may be new to be part of a *talanoa* for a study may find it difficult to engage if things are structured and rigid for them to explore their experiences with what precarity may mean for their household. It provides an opportunity for the individual or household to draw on different things from their experiences without having to feel constrained to one particular topic. *Talanoa* can be between two or more people depending on the context and the location. Location and context do matter when you engaged in a *talanoa* because it directs how everyone is engaging within that group. For example, there are different types of talanoa that is conducted in a Tongan setting such as *talanoa faikava* or *talanoa faka'eke'eke. Talanoa faikava* is usually done where *kava* is prepared to drink at a gathering while *talanoa faka'eke'eke* can manifest in the act of questioning and depending on the answer for that question, more questions can be formed for further discussion (Vaioleti, 2013). Thus, *talanoa* is more than just holding a conversation, it's about who is present, and the type of context will influence the way a *talanoa* is conducted.

Understanding the Social Structure in a Tongan Community and the Role of a Tongan Researcher

Aotearoa has the largest Pacific population in the world. However, it is important to understand the social structure of these participants, their shared beliefs, and the principles they uphold within their community. For this study, these households are all Tongan families who

will share their stories and how they cope daily. Before unpacking these stories, it is important to understand the history of the Tongan People and their story of migration to Aotearoa. Tonga remains the only Pacific nation that has never been colonized in the Pacific. As such, despite its small island and its capacity, Tonga is governed by the King and his household as well as the constitutions that codify the customary hierarchical class structures which attempt to create clear divisions between the royals, the nobles, and the commoners (Gucake, 2017). Over the years, more Tongan People are living out of Tonga due to wanting a better lifestyle, better education, and employment for children. According to Stats (2018), census indicates 82,389 identify as Tongans in Aotearoa and could be assume this figure has increase overtime. The framework that will be used when conducting these interviews is *Talanoa* and the metaphor of using Kakala as an overarching for the process of the interviews.

Since the social structure in a Tongan community is predominantly hierarchical it is crucial to understand their ways of living. Tongan society is built on the *Kavei Koula e fā- the four gold pillars*. These pillars were articulated by Queen Salote in her speech at the opening of the Tongan Cultural Heritage. The four pillars consist of *faka'apa'apa, anga fakatokilalo/loto tō, tauhi vaha'a and mamahi'i me'a*. The foundation of these pillars is *'ofa* and these core values are expected to uphold our daily lives and the ideal on which all Tongans should aspire to live successfully with God, land, and people (Gucake, 2017). With this in mind, Tongan People are grounded and connected to these principles through the way they practice their traditions, uphold their values, and how they interact within themselves or with other ethnic groups. This is inclusive with Tongans overseas where many are strongly embedded in their culture and build their families on these values.

The Researcher's Positionality

As a Tongan researcher, I am fortunate to be on this platform to work with my social network in unpacking some of these issues that they may not be conscious of but silently living

it through. These values that were previously mentioned are not foreign rather something to cooperate when interacting with these families. The concept of *faka'apa'apa* is the idea of unquestioning obedience, respect for those with higher rank and is the essence of social order in Tonga (Gucake, 2017). However, between participants and myself, this concept nurtures the relationship, guiding how questions are asked and being able to read the body language of participants when they feel unease and giving them space when needed.

The meaning of *anga fakatōkilalo* is an important aspect of research to understand as it speaks to humility or having an open mind to learn from one another. When interacting with the two participating families, they are the experts on how precarity impacts their lives, this requires myself as the researcher to be flexible and not forcing answers to fit my research. Sometimes it often means to listen with a steady heart, responding with compassion and without judgment, instead validating their stories and acknowledging that these topics are sensitive to talk about with someone other than within their network.

Tauhi vaha'a alludes to the idea of maintaining that relationship before and after the interview with participating families. The way this may unfold in research is by keeping the participants informed on how their information is analyzed and also presenting the findings to them at the end of the final report. In this way, it assures them where their stories are going and how it is influencing research for a better future for their children.

Lastly, the idea of *mamahi'i me'a* emphasizes passion or loyalty in whatever the individual puts their effort to. As a researcher, there are multiple roles to play and it is important to maintain compassion and loyalty to my participants. Personally, one of my main roles is protecting my participants and also making sure that once the *talanoa* is concluded, I do hope to provide a sense of hope for a promising future. All these principles relate to the idea of '*ofa* as it links to notions of love. Remedying the stories and conducting this research speaks to the love I have for my community and the ongoing issues we face on a daily basis. Thus, if a

researcher does not carry this within themselves, participants can feel it and may withdraw in the *talanoa.*

Kakala as an Overarching Framework for Talanoa

The present study will draw on the images and talk produced in collaboration with two Tongan households as a single case study, at this point it is appropriate to have a Pacific framework such as *Kakala* methodology to contextualize this *talanoa.* In general, it is important to unpack the origins of *Kakala*, what it's made out of, and how its use in Tongan society. The Western translation of *Kakala* is garlands and it is typically made by skilled older women depending on the occasion. Weaving and forming these *Kakala* requires patience, time, and concentration to produce the finished garland. During the process of weaving these beautiful garlands, children are running around and through the village to pick flowers for the weavers. The flowers selected are ranked just how the people in Tonga are ranked. The flowers are then wrapped with a piece of cloth and a variety of needles with strings of *fau* (fibers stripped from the bark of the *fau* tree). Depending on the occasion that a *Kakala* is prepared for, the women weave an appropriate *Kakala* to fit with the occasion. For example, flowers that will be used for a *Kakala* in a funeral will differ from a *Kakala* being prepared for a birthday, graduation, or wedding. These *Kakala* carry a distinct fragrance and when you smell it from afar you can determine the type of occasion the *Kakala* is being prepared for. Although the process may seem disorganized or happenstance from the outside it is where women collaborate, talk through their ideas, it allows space for open dialogue but most importantly, resources are exchanged, and skills are passed onto the next generation. This speaks to the collectivist community within a Tongan society.

Far beyond its beauty and what it's generally used for in a Tongan community, no one had envisioned *Kakala* as a methodology. The *Kakala* Research framework was put together by Professor Konai Helu Thaman (Fua, 2014). The *Kakala* Research framework and its original

processes were of *Teu, Toli, Tui,* and *Luva* with the addition of *Malie* and *Mafana.* It is important to unpack what each process means in general then further contextualize it within the context of my Masters research project.

Teu

Teu is the initial stage or preparatory stage before the work begins (Fua, 2014). This is often seen where young girls are sent out to the village with a clear message on the types of flowers they are going to look for. Often, it takes time to search through the village to find these flowers, but it also requires thought and time in this process. Within the context of a research setting, this is often where the researcher asks questions such as - what is the issue we are wanting to investigate? Who is impacted? What do we already know about the issue? How can we respond to the issue? When do we act? Why should we act?

This stage is seen as the conceptualization of the research. In my Masters research project, this was evident through weekly meetings with the wider research team, where we would review the questions that were intended to be part of the *talanoa.* The team was composed of people with differing backgrounds and areas of expertise, as such, we all brought a variety of worldviews to this space and this was a vital process for the team to be on the same page before conducting these *talanoa.* It required patience and tolerance as some of these questions had to be worded in a way that would not dehumanize our participants in the process of our *talanoa.* It allowed us to work as a team, respect each other's opinions with the intention of developing questions to better fit the participants in the study and to speak to their realities.

Toli

Toli refers to the idea to pick a flower or choose an object (Fua, 2014). The flowers for a garland are purposely selected and vigilantly picked depending on the design that has been chosen during the *Teu* stage. For example, if the purpose of preparing these garlands are for a funeral, there are specific flowers that are hand-picked by the girls. These girls are instructed by the women to search through the different gardens around the village to gather these specific

flowers. As such, within a research context, this is considered as the data collection stage where the researcher is guided by the ethics that's been approved to carry out these *talanoas* with the following participants.

In the process of thoughts and contemplation, I decided to recruit my participants through my Tongan church. At first, I approached one of the pastors for advice on how we could recruit these families. This pastor looks after all families and has a fair idea of which family I could approach and ask if they wanted to take part in the study. Due to the delay in time, I approached the youth pastor as well to help with the recruiting process. At this point, I worked closely with the youth pastor in having our research proposal condensed into one page and translated into Tongan for those who are not able to comprehend or speak in English. Once the youth pastor had identified these families, we would approach them after Sunday service, contacting them through social media before making a time to give the one-page sheet to sign and make a time to meet for the *talanoa.* For this research, there were only two to three families that were needed to take part in the study. However, when we approached these families, seven families came forward willing and able to be interviewed by me. Due to the limited time, resources, and funding the youth pastor and I had to decide which family we will continue with the *talanoa*. Once everything was confirmed, I had to report back to these families and explain why we had to reduce our sample size for this study. Thankfully, these families understood and remained to be supported and willing to help with whatever in the future for this research. The criteria of eligibility to be part of the study is that participants needed to be:

Eligibility: You can participate in this study if you:

- 18 years of age
- Reside in Auckland
- Are or have recently been in low paid work
- Earn below the living wage

- Identify as Pacific (Tongan).

The *talanoa* would take place wherever the participant was comfortable or agreed to meet, typically their house. Families who agreed to be part of the study were voluntary and the *talanoa* consisted of 4 sessions at place and time at a mutually agreed location. The *talanoa* lasted 60 minutes on average depending on how the participants answered the questions and articulated some of their answers. The *talanoa* will be unstructured in a way that it is open to more than one person to speak from that particular household. For example, if the first *talanoa* was given by the mother of that household and at the end, she decides to have her husband or one of their children, it was open and flexible for them to do so for the next *talanoa.* Consent forms and information sheets were given to participants to sign before the *talanoa* took place. These *talanoa* will be recorded through my phone and they will be transcribed once all *talanoa* is completed. As a Tongan researcher as well as myself being a church member, it is important this information is unpacked for the families to understand before anything takes place. Often in some context, participants tend to scan through the information sheet and can miss some information that they are entitled to while being part of the study. Thus, I must ensure this information is clear and answer any questions or concerns that participants may experience or feel before recording the *talanoa.*

Tui

Tui has several meanings in the Tongan language such as "belief", "knee" or "string a garland" (Fua, 2014). However, concerning research, this process is considered to be the analysis stage for the researcher. As such, during the *Tui* stage, it follows a particular pattern following the event and person/occasion the garland is intended for. This is usually a collective process of women stringing the garland together while the girls are out to collect more flowers. As within a research framework, it is usually evident when there are negotiations taking place, passing of information, readjusting initial plans, and making sure all information is clear to be out on the field. Because this study is part of a broader project, I needed to be working closely

with my supervisor checking that everything was appropriate before meeting my participants. Once we had finished our *talanoa*, it was time to discuss and think about potential angles or themes from these *talanoas*. Some of these angles needed to be refined to specify particular issues amongst this household while themes are slowly emerging from the stories of these participants.

As part of the interview process I encouraged participants to take some photos and describe why they have chosen to take that particular photo in their home or elsewhere. Some participants may take many or fewer photos but the main thing for this part of the *talanoa* is allowing them to articulate reasons concerning the photos that've been presented in front of us. This type of process is known as photo-elicitation that is often used in a qualitative study for participants who are open to take photos or share some of their photos to tell their stories and experiences in life. Utilizing photo-elicitation enables the participants to talk in-depth about their experiences and also the photo may trigger some memories that they may be unconscious about.

The visual methodology of photo elicitation was used in an ethnographic sense which allows participants to guide the conversations and for viewers to position themselves as observers of the journey (Harrison, 2004; Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012). The photographs in this study were used to facilitate dialouge which moved the images beyond their static material, thus we completed narratives, and examined perspectives beyond the images alone (Hodgetts, Chamberlain & Groot, 2020). Photo elicitation has been used in previous research to better understand a broad range of issues, including methamphetamine use (Copes et al., 2018), homelessness (Groot & Hodgetts, 2012) and street-survival (Groot & Hodgetts, 2015) in a safe context for participants. Social scientists call on these measures to be used for "…examining the connection between people's lives and the social and economic structures of the larger world" (Wagner, 1979, p.18). As stated in these descriptions, participants expressed themselves

via various research tools such as genograms, drawings and photos. These methods allow participants to express their worldviews in various ways with a focus on situations, place and people. Visual and verbal methods combined contribute to strong relational ethics as it offers diverse ways of interacting, rather than a "one-fits-all" verbal pedagogy.

Luva

To *Luva* a gift usually means that the gift is given with heartfelt sincerity, humility, and honor (Fua, 2014). This signifies the amount of effort that's been put forward by the older women weaving the garlands, and the time the younger girls had gone out to gather these flowers, and the sacrifice required to create a stunning *Kakala.* With the result of weaving the *Kakala,* it gives time for the women to reflect and review the strings they were weaving and order in the way that is required. This also gives the women time to see if there is anything to fix, amend or repair within the *Kakala* before presenting it to those who had requested it. In the process of research, *Luva* is the stage where it is reporting or dissemination stage which signals a process of returning the gift of knowledge to the people who had given their knowledge or stories of their lived realities. Vaioleti T (2006) depicts how *Luva* is important in the context of Polynesian values such as *'ofa (*love, compassion), *faka'apa'apa* (respect), and *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocity and responsibility for each other). This is something that is upheld and should be understood by Pacific researchers during this process.

As such, when disseminating results at the end the hope is to invite these participants to a *Fono* or a gathering to present these findings. Alternatively, participants may be given a copy of the study so that they are aware of how the information was used in the study and how it can contribute to the overall research. Thus, it maintains the trust and reassurance between the researcher and the families.

Malie

Malie refers to an audience that appreciates a performance, it is an expression of "well done", (Fua, 2014). Within the Tongan protocols, it has emphasized that the audience has

appreciated the interplay between the music, the dance, the costumes, and most importantly, the performers. These things need to be connected as it tells a story or meaning on the actions of these performers. However, if one does not respond from the audience, it is understood that the performance was not *malie* which may emphasize that the performance was too complicated to understand, or it was not done well enough (Vatuvei, 2017). As such, this allows the *punake* (choreographer) to reflect on how to change some of the actions or parts of the song for future performance. In contrast to using the *Kakala* Framework in research, this refers to the evaluation process in the study. Some of the potential questions a researcher may reflect on are: Was this useful? Who was it useful for? Who benefited from the research? Were the talanoa sessions meaningful? This is something that requires constant monitoring during the process of the study rather than at the end.

Within the present study, we were given a sheet with similar questions to reflect on at the end of each talanoa session. This allowed time for me to reflect on myself were the questions or subtopic delivered in a way the participant easily understood, it gave me time to also reflect on the overall *talanoa.* The purpose of this was to be able to see what we're something we could adjust and change before returning to the household for the second session. There must be no set rules on doing a talanoa, but it was useful to reflect and elaborate on some topics that seemed important to the participants rather than rushing them through the whole set of questions. Thankfully, there were no major changes when conducting these *talanoas* as both families were able to understand the questions as it was delivered in their native tongue. Having these families share in their native tongue was authentic as they share about their lived experience living in a western country.

Mafana

Mafana refers to the idea of warmth within an individual, something that is heartfelt and has touched one's emotion at a deeper level (Fua 2014). In the context of a Tongan

performance, this is usually evident when the audience goes up and puts money or tapa cloth on the performer. Due to the hierarchical society in Tonga, people are sitting on the floor as a form of respect to the performer or laying on the ground to emphasize they are lower than the individual. Often this is part of our tradition as Tongan, but it also emphasizes the humility and different position an individual is at within that context. However, within the research context, this can be seen as the final evaluation process where the researcher and the participant are both transformed or have new solutions or understanding to families living in a precarious state.

This stage is vital because it indicates that we are giving back to the participant their knowledge and recognizing their ability to have their input to their problems. For example, in our current study, the role of researchers is to go into the houses of these families and facilitate this *talanoa.* These families are the expert of their own experiences and lived realities of precarity, so it is important that it is recognised and it is clear to them how their story will be used in an academic space. Furthermore, by giving them a sense of empowerment as part of being in the study, it allows them to see the bigger picture on how their story may not only impact us as researchers but also within their community and those in government. The hope is to have these relationships maintained between the researcher and participant, but it also reassures that there is no shame in sharing their experiences being at a precarity state in their community. It also speaks to the idea of walking with humility and not taking these stories for granted as a researcher and exploiting them to credit this study. Rather, it is allowing ourselves as a researcher to help those who are in need, ensuring their stories are heard and be optimistic that change will occur in the future.

Photo Elicitation

For this study, we have decided to include photo-elicitation as part of our *talanoa* sessions with these families. This type of interview is fairly new to use in Pacific research but

it is useful to introduce it in the study. When asking participants to take photos of their own lived realities it gives them the power but also ownership as they are the expert of precarity. One photo is never enough when using photo-elicitation because the stories of their lived experiences are interconnected and it will require more than one photo. The participants will often find themselves drawing from memories that they are unconscious of.

For centuries, Pacific Peoples across Oceania have been telling their stories. Not just vocally, but also through dance, pottery, weaving, motifs, markings, paintings, costumes, masks, pendants, ceremonies, food preparation – the list is timeless and endless. The way Pacific Peoples may interpret these photos may differ to another ethnic group. It is evident in the meaning, the interpretation, and the negotiation. The way we *analyze* the data is where the difference lies. Pacific Peoples do not need to 'decolonize' the methodology; it already embraces creativity, fluidity, privileges the stories that People give us, and demands you hold yourself accountable. We already understand ourselves as material beings, we understand the need for relational ethics, we understand the importance of knowledge sharing, and that spaces and places are imbibed with meaning and provide a focal point for enacting whanaungatanga (or inhibiting and diminishing). Photo-elicitation complements what we already do as cultural beings. Given this will be in a form of *talanoa*, it is important to cooperate with these types of methods.

Using photo-elicitation within a talanoa

Within a *talanoa* context, using photo-elicitation is something new for participants who are part of this study. O'Neill et al., (2017) reported Tongan children confirmed that during the summer school holidays, the participants mostly took photos of activities happening at home with a family member, church and cultural activities. This suggests using images does work despite what age group the individual is at, they can describe and talk more about that particular event while using the images as a guide to their talanoa. Utilizing the photo-elicitation into the

talanoa will be something new for the participants to take part however will be rewarding as they are allowed to take or select their photos and talk about them during the *talanoa.* For some participants, taking photos and including them in a *talanoa* maybe something new to experience and different from other *talanoa* that they may have come across. This will take place at the end of interview three where I ask the participants to do a photo-elicitation task to picture aspects of their lives that may seem relevant to the term of precarity. It allows the participants to reflect on previous issues that were discussed or other issues they think are important and which we might have missed while doing the *talanoa*.

Participants are then asked if they have access to a camera or it could be something we could provide for the photo-elicitation tasks. If they are not comfortable with using the camera, help will be offered and also to anyone else in the household to assist while taking these photos. It is important to assure participants that these photographs do not have to be pretty or artistic as this is not important. The purpose of this photo-elicitation task is to allow them to take photos of people, objects, places that are significant to them over a week. These photos will be collected once it's done and participants who may have photos of other people will be explicitly asked for their permission to be included. As such, once everything that's been collected from participants and given their explanation for each image, the photos will be anonymized identifying features using computer software.

Participants are asked that if they are taking any private space such as public property, stores, and theaters they may need to ask permission. Also, participants can delete images that they do not want to be seen or accidentally taken. For this household, some of these participants are elderly and it is important they understand how to take part in this task. Some of these elderly can get their children or grandchildren to take these photos depending on what they choose to capture for the talanoa. This task is not strictly focused on just one person from the household, rather, it could vary on who may be interested to take part in this task.

Tauhi vā through a Tongan lens: Final methodological considerations

In the recent work of Tongan socio-anthropologist, Dr. Tevita Ka'ili *"Tauhi Vā: Creating Beauty through the Art of Sociospatial Relations"* (2007) he refers to Dr. 'Okusitino Mahina's conceptualisation of *tā* and *vā* or time and space, to explain *vā* as "… relational space between two time-markers *(tā).* It is a space that is fashioned through the relationship between time-markers – beats, things, or people." (Mahina 2004). *Vā,* in its widest sense, is the spaces between two bodies or entities, and the nature of that relationship. By tauhi — meaning to nurture or maintain — the *vā* — or relational space in-between — a person can create harmony or beauty, particularly when there is a symmetrical or mutual exchange of *tauhi vā* in return. Smith and Foliaki (2021) defines the concept of *tauhi vā* as taking care of or nurturing the spaces between people and things to maintain harmonious relationships. In this sense, *tauhi vā* is energised through acts of reciprocity that serve to build stronger relationships and community. In the process of contextualising the stories elicited from both households, the concept of *tauhi vā* connects each family to society but it also draws them closer to their culture, their people and how they situate themselves within Aotearoa. *Tauhi* may also refer to 'protect' or 'care' which extends its meaning to the role of researchers to protect the stories of the people who participate in our research. Some of these stories have impacted Pacific families for generations and others who arrive here on our shores with fresh eyes and hearts are encountering the devastating impacts of precarity for the first time. In the following chapter, I offer the reader the stories that were shared with me.

Chapter 3

Analysis Chapter

This section will explore the intersections between housing, work, and health when considering the impacts of precarity for Suliana and Hingano's households. This intersectional analysis foregrounds experiences of diasporic and emplaced hardship, exploitative relations, systemic violence and practices of oppression, which are often played out within everyday institutional arrangements that reproduce discriminatory and inequitable socio-economic hierarchies. This shift to intersectionality is important because groups are not only positioned inequitably within classed socio-economic hierarchies following economic factors such as occupation, employment status, and income. They are also positioned concerning ethnicities, migrant status and histories, and places. Suliana discussed the relentless everyday attrition of precarity as she tries to navigate a capitalist system reflective of western values to support her family whereas Hingano discussed his experiences of precarity as a first-generation migrant attempting to build a home and place of belonging for his family here in Aotearoa.

However, there is more to their stories than oppression and despair, the household cases provide numerous examples of caring for people who *tauhi vā,* and how even in the darkest of moments it blesses the lives of others. *Tauhi vā* provides an overarching lens to understand the stories of Suliana and Hingano and how they relate to people, places and structures in society such as a chaotic service landscape they are forced to navigate to combat precarity. Tongan People know how to be there for those members of our community who are in distress and in times of need. *Tauhi vā* comes from the heart, and it creates strong bonds of love for one another. Precarity is experienced as the disruption to *tauhi vā* and the hope of utilising the stories of these two households is to paint a picture of what it looks like within the Tongan community. As a Tongan researcher, it was important to ensure *tauhi va*

was maintained between the families that I had recruited for the study. Being fluent in the Tongan language was also an advantage as I was able to articulate terminologies that were difficult to understand for the participants. These *talanoas* were meaningful to conduct as some of their experience resonate with my story, bringing our culture, values and using a Tongan lens to analyse these *talanoa*. Thus, it is my upbringing that has influenced the choice of using my culture and values in research but to also showcase the stories of my people.

The case of Suliana

In this section, Suliana elaborates her experience with precarity and as a Tongan woman living in Aotearoa. Suliana has set the context of her story and where she's currently at today but some of her experiences were often from the past and present. From Suliana's story, these were the following themes that she shared about, experiencing of unfair treatment in the workforce, preserving food to last her family, the condition of her house and also how her faith became her coping mechanism. Thus, these themes were further discussed with examples drawn from Suliana's talanoa and examples that relates to the idea of precarity.

Suliana household

"Ko 'eku faka'amu ke nau moui lelei mo fiefia 'ihe kaha'u"

"I hope they will be happy and healthy in the future.

A significant quote that was taken from our *talanoa* which speaks to the character of Suliana. Despite her circumstance of living in a precariat state, she remained optimistic for the future of her children. Suliana is 49 years of age and has resided in Mangere East in a Housing New Zealand home for some time now. Suliana hails from the villages of Nukunuku and Otea, Tongatapu, her then-husband was the first to migrate into Aotearoa, working tirelessly to make ends meet to send money back to their family in Tonga. A few years later

Suliana joined him with their five children, wanting a better future filled with opportunity for her children.

Prior to conducting the *talanoa* with Suliana, she had described what it was like raising her children on her own in Tonga. Suliana was in tears as she struggled to put her lived experiences into words because the wounds were still felt fresh. She described when her husband had moved to Aotearoa, in the process of waiting for money to be sent back to Tonga, she would go out in the early hours into the ocean to fish for breakfast before her kids would go to school and then would spend most of her days back in the ocean to get enough for dinner. Some days were good and other days she returned home with an empty bag.

In 2008, Suliana made the decision to migrate to Aotearoa with their children as it was perceived to be the land of 'milk and honey'. Aotearoa New Zealand has long been mythologised as a 'land of milk and honey' for migrant and diasporic communities– a promised land of natural abundance and endless opportunity (Bell et al., 2017). However, for many Pacific migrants the neoliberal economics and globalising politics of Aotearoa New Zealand have only exacerbated inequalities that are differentially experienced by class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and age. Migrating to Aotearoa was a culture shock for Suliana and the constraints of life cost her marriage and led to her filing for divorce. Suliana is the main career for all her children, taking on both parental roles, as a father and a mother.

According to (Humpage, 2012), in Pacific communities, it is common for male elders to make decisions regarding the welfare of the extended family. This is expected within the Tongan community as it is predominantly grounded in a patriarchal system. In Suliana's case, after having lived away from her husband in Tonga for quite some time, the pressures of life, migrating and adapting to a new environment in Aotearoa had put a lot of strain on their marriage. Suliana decided it would be best to file for divorce and she now cares for the children full-time.

Due to her marriage coming to an end, Suliana was the one who makes decisions that are usually reserved for men within the household. Taking on both roles as a parent and trying to make ends meet can be exhausting; physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually if they do not have the right support systems put in place or if their support systems are equally exhausted and struggling. With young children at the time, Suliana moved across jobs and was determined to work multiple jobs to be able to provide for her children. As a single mother, this was incredibly hard to balance work demands and making sure she was able to pick up and drop off for her kids as well as being at work. When the eldest child finishing off high school, Suliana was in a good space to work while the eldest was able to care for the rest of her siblings. This is usually the case for many Pacific households where the eldest assumes the role of a second parent to the young ones while the parents are working.

Fast forward to now, Suliana's eldest daughter had just married and was currently living in the same household. Suliana had left a precarious and inflexible cleaning job to care for her children full-time. The eldest daughter was married and her husband's income allowed them to gather resources to meet rising living costs. Suliana's eldest daughter was a casual worker for a plastics manufacturing company and the husband had a permanent role as a construction worker. Suliana describes her son-in-law as their main source of income because his job was more secure, and the income was consistent. He works as a construction worker for long hours, from sunrise to sunset. Additionally, Suliana's second eldest daughter was unemployed and her eldest son had moved out with his little family. The youngest siblings were in secondary school with a 3-year-old grandson who also lived with Suliana while the parents are out working.

In the following sections, Suliana's story will highlight five key things that are associated with precarity. These key things will be looking at Suliana's experience in the employment space where she had experience unfair treatment in the workforce, preserving

food, the condition of her home and how her faith became her coping mechanism while living in precarity.

Experience of unfair treatment in the workforce

Traversing the seas of uncertainty, migrating with the hopes of a better future, Suliana had no idea what was waiting for her on the other side of the shores. The first *talanoa* was difficult for Suliana to unpack as she had to relive wounding memories as a new migrant working in Aotearoa. These emotions were indescribable and we had to pause in between questions to give Suliana some space before continuing to the next questions. The unfair treatment she had received within the jobs that she was working in and the untenable hours she was given to complete her job speak to a common exploitative neoliberal workplace practice that impacted her and her family's wellbeing. Soon after arriving, Suliana began working as a cleaner in a large multi-level building. As Suliana described the conditions of her work at that time, she also recounted the breakdown that was occurring within her marriage which only added more pressure for her to be employed because she will be the only source of income for her family. As a cleaner, Suliana was given three floors to cover within three hours of her shift. She worked diligently and was determined to do her best in every shift that she was given, leaving the floors spotless. However, it was impossible to complete this task to an expected occupational health and safety standards within the meagre time that was given to her. During our conversation, Suliana became emotional as she recalled pleading with her supervisor if she could just bring some of her older children with her to help complete the task she'd been handed. The fear of being fired by her supervisor made it difficult for Suliana to approach her supervisor. For Pacific women who are in these low-paid jobs, they often fear challenging or questioning those in management roles so they suffer in silence and are exploited:

"… na'aku kole kihe supervisor ha taimi pe keu alu mo e kauleka ou nau lava e vekiume mo e me'a pea taimi ni'ihi ku taofi mai ia ou ai tokotaha pe e au…"
"I asked my supervisor if I could bring some of my children as they are more than capable to do the vacuuming while I clean other things, but she did not allow it."

Suliana shares similar experiences as other precarious cleaners in which she was subjected to insecure work hours, poor working conditions, and exploitation (Larson et al., 2019). The cleaning industry in Aotearoa has become progressively more competitive yet, it is still the lowest paying work (Ryan & Herod, 2006). The cause of the issues within the cleaning industry stems from the changes in neoliberal structures that deregulated the industry into private and 'flexible' working environments. Most cleaning contracts are part-time or casual and require workers to work non-standard hours (i.e. early morning or late nights; Ryan & Herod, 2006). Further, women are more likely to be in precarious work and paid lower wages, often due to the discriminatory nature of employers and the need for flexible hours to support caregiving responsibilities (Young, 2010).

Similarly, her experiences as a cleaner are not just reducible to a particular industry but mirror those of many Pacific Peoples and what it is like to not be supported or heard by their employer. As a migrant to be treated in that manner often affects the way you may perceive yourself. It may influence the individual to not speak out if anything happens at work and the individual may take on that additional pressure while facing their own at a personal level. Being a mother and working in this environment, trapped by exploitation, in the excerpt above Suliana describes asking the children to help out not as a sign of weakness but as a way of working collectively as Pacific Peoples. The lack of opportunity and mobility that comes with being in the precariat leaves her no other option but to ask her children for support or lose their only source of income. She hoped that by allowing the children to see

how hard she must work for them; this may also hopefully motivate them to seek more opportunities for themselves in service of the community.

When considering the connections between Suliana's experience to notions of *vā,* it is clear that the *vā* between herself and her employer is disrupted. *Tauhi vā* contrasts with neoliberal and individualistic ideologies around making choices. Within the constraints of violent structures, the decisions Suliana made were not based on selfish motives; they were decisions based on the best outcome for her family. Most of the time Suliana would describe herself in this job, she would be desperately running from one end to another, moving across three levels to be completed.

> *"Ka ko e ngaue mo e me'a koia, ko ete lele pe fakato'oto'o e me'a kotoa, ko hono mo'oni fu'u lahi e me'a mo e ngaue kia au he taimi koia."*
> *"With work at the time, I would run back and forth, and it was too much for me to do on my own."*

As I inserted this quote, I could clearly hear the emotions moving through her as we sat and reflected on the precarious nature of her job. Suliana had expressed how she's treated in the job and the way the supervisor had dismissed her request. She feared that if she was unable to complete all three levels within the limited timeframe given, her job would be re-advertised online due to this reason. The term 'race to the bottom' refers to the competition between cleaning companies to deliver the lowest costs in their services to "win" contracts (Ryan & Herod, 2006). Cleaning companies cut costs by lowering wages, reducing contract hours, and dismissing long-term permanent workers to achieve high profits. This has led to a fractured industry including less monitoring of work regulations such as health and safety, a lack of human resources, and communication of rights and entitlements (Zock, 2005).

Moreover, the *va* between herself and the supervisor is disrupted in a way that Suliana may not feel comfortable asking for leave if needed or anything with regards to work. Suliana may encounter some difficulties with handling her workload, she may not be able to share this with her boss because relationship and trust is not established among them. From a cultural perspective, Suliana's employer appears to lack cultural competency in a sense of providing a space where employers feel safe and comfortable to be themselves. As Pasifika (2016) reported practicing *tauhi vā* requires energy, resources and time to provide a space where Pacific values are upheld. This was not the case for Suliana's workplace where often she feels like she's walking on edge trying to attain excellence through her performance in her work ethic.

Additionally, the language barrier may come into play in such circumstances not only for Suliana but for others in this type of employment. Not being able to fully express yourself to your employer hinders people ability to not only speak out on such matters but the employer could potentially withhold vital information about employment rights. As such, people may continue to stay silent either due to the fear of losing their job or being unable to articulate themselves in a manner their employer would understand. In some cases, other cleaners encounter working long hours without a living wage where the income they are receiving is not able to accommodate necessities within their household. Thus, it may lead to seeking a second or multiple jobs so that the income from both jobs may be able to cover all cost that is required within their household, fragmenting families and decimating opportunities to be together.

Preserving food to last for my family

The significance of food is evident in a Tongan culture as it may uphold different meanings depending on the occasion, beyond simply providing fuel for the body. Manova and McCabe (2008) suggest food is fundamental to establishing and sustaining meaningful

relationships or *vā* in many Pacific societies. Since Tongan is a hierarchal society, food is also ranked depending on the guest or present event. For example, the food that would be prepared for a funeral will differ for a wedding preparation as well as those who are attending, food that holds high value are often given to the father's side as they are superior to the mother's side in the Tongan tradition. According to Tukuitonga (2013) reported type 2 diabetes and overweight among Pacific People is higher than among those that are living in Aotearoa. One reason that may associate with this finding is that due to its affordability, Pacific Peoples would purchase something less nutritious to cater to the size of their family.

Graham, Stolte, Hodgetts, & Chamberlain, (2019) reported people who were accessing food parcels through the government-funded welfare support through work and income was a distressing, humiliating experience. As such this is prevalent for people living in a precariat state, some of them may refuse to go through the process because they either feel shame on trying to seek help. Drawing from observation within our Tongan community, some of my relatives had the same experience where they would not want to seek social welfare for help because of the shame they may bring upon their family and the process can be daunting when asked too many questions that may be confronting for some. It's either trying to find an alternative way how to bring income home or asking for relatives that may have leftover food. For this particular reason, it is less humiliating asking their relatives rather than facing the system in fear of getting rejected.

Fletcher et al., (2020) highlight how during the current COVID pandemic those from low-income households and who are already in precarious labour in terms of both limited amount of work and low pay, took a large hit from job loss, which has important implications for wellbeing. Suliana recalls these arduous experiences as she would try to figure out how to make ends meet with the limited income at hand. In our conversations, we had her daughter sitting with us while Suliana recalls these memories. Suliana talked about the persistent

pressure of thinking and planning how to cover the needs of her household. Being under this much pressure, Suliana would often adopt a positive attitude as she did not want her children to see what she was going through. When Suliana unpacked more of these experiences, the atmosphere changed and emotions broke out as her daughter finally realised what her mother had endured all these years. As Suliana explained:

> "*Fa'a a'u atu ia kiha ngahi uike pea ai e me'a ia ku fu'u fiema'u hange ko e fakakiki mo e me'a ka ko eni e anga eku fakakaukau, kapau ka a'u atu kiha uike ku lahi ha me'a ku pau ke kumi mai e kapaika ia ke lahi ke a'u kihe sapate, mai mo e tua'i moa, fanga ki'I kiki pe ke oua e misi ha aho ko e fanga ki'i me'a ke tatapuki kapaika e pa fa'a taimi e ni'ihi ku mai ku mei expire kuo pau ke mono tousi kotoa ihe ovani o tanaki kiha pini, to'o hake ia fo'i cracker pe ia ka kuo pau keu fakakaukau'i pe ko e ha e me'a e tolonga ke a'u e me'akai. Oku ikai ke pehe e au fu'u hala aupito, ka kou feinga pe ke kuki pe me'akai o tolonga kiha aho toki ma'u ai ha vahe"*
>
> "*Often some weeks something may have come up, so I will need to ensure we put money towards that but also thinking about preserving food. Usually, I would look at cheap tuna canned food, buy heaps of that to last us till that Sunday. Considering the bread, when it is near its expiry date, I will toast all of them, put them into one bin and so by the time the children will eat it, it is more of a cracker rather than bread. It doesn't mean we have nothing at all, but I try my best to cook food that will last us until our next pay".*

While analysing this *talanoa* with Suliana, this quote stood out to me because it speaks so much to what a Tongan mother has to go through to another day of living. It is obvious that through this *talanoa* there's so much thought that Suliana is taking into account

to plan and think about ways to preserve the food in their household. This may have increased worries with the uncertainty that if she was unable to preserve the food for her family, she may feel as if she's failed her role as a mother. Utilising cheap canned food may also impact the health of her children but in Suliana's case, she has no alternative as to buying healthy food that she is unable to afford. With limited options within Suliana's situation, she is torn between the options of starving or buying cheap canned food to avoid starvation within their household.

Food insecurity is common within precarious whānau and is physically and psychologically stressful (Jackson, & Graham, 2017). Providing enough food was always a priority for her family, and at times, she would sacrifice her own needs to feed her children. Food insecurity is a facet of precarity extends beyond the notion of "the lack of food" (McConville & Groot, 2013). Structural violence and inequalities for Pacific families manifest through food insecurity. Current Government solutions focus predominantly on food banks and food grants offered through charities for precariat families in insecure employment, however; they do not address the structural issues that lead to food insecurity (Giddens, 1984). They further exacerbate the neoliberal discourse that food insecurity is the result of poor financial choices within the family (McConville & Groot, 2013). However, as Suliana and other families continue to prove, it is a reflection of failed systems where a wealthy nation such as Aotearoa continues to export food while its citizens cannot afford to eat.

Utter et al.,(2007) reported their findings of children who miss breakfast and lunch to have poor nutrient intakes from those who have breakfast and lunch. This finding may also relate to Suliana's case considering the possibility of some days her children may need to miss a meal due to the limited food they for that particular week. The impacts of not eating can influence the behaviour and concentration of the child if they have not had access to

breakfast or lunch before and during school. Based on observation and growing up within our community, it was common to see children come to school with neither breakfast nor lunch. Often if these children were to have lunch, it was mostly junk food because it was the only option their parents were able to afford. If children were to come with healthy food meant it would be difficult to cater for others in their household. As a result, either way in Suliana's case, it is an impossible and dehumanising position to be in.

As we talked about the living conditions in their current home, Suliana mentioned their kitchen is quite small to accommodate her family. For quality time as a family, dinner was the most common thing everyone would be present to share about their day and spend time with one another. However, due to the size being too small, the adults will sit on the main table while the rest will sit on the floor and have their dinner together. Despite the size, Suliana felt that it was important that everyone ate together at the same time so they had to find a solution on how to fit everyone in that particular space. Suliana expresses her hopes for the future saying:

> *" Pea kou faka'amu pe ha taimi, na'e to e faingamalie ange pe ko e to e ha hono fakalelei 'a faleni ko e 'uhinga ko e ki'i fo'i loki kai 'oku fu'u si'isi'i 'aupito".*
> *" I do hope there will be a time where renovations can be done within this house because our kitchen is far too small".*

This quote illustrates the hope of a mother wanting a more suitable space for her children to dine together as a family. The possibility of making this hope come true is uncertain but she had talked about how it would be nice and fitting to have a kitchen that could fit all her children in and be able to share a meal. Poltorak (2007) highlighted *tauhi vā* can be expressed in sharing food among those who are around you. As such, having dinner is

not just about spending time but it illustrates the sharing between people as it strengthens the bond between them. For example, this may be a coping mechanism for Suliana as she gathers her family around the kitchen table sharing a meal it may give her a sense of hope for the future.

Drawing from personal experience as a Tongan researcher, this was often seen and practised in our village growing up. Every Sunday was significant because it did not matter if you came from a working-class or middle-class family, food was exchanged between the neighbours. This speaks to the concept of *tauhi vā* with people outside your household and often Tongan People still practice this in Aotearoa. Maintaining these traditions are important as it continues to keep people in the diaspora connected to their Island. In Tonga, the kitchen is usually outside for communal use and food are usually prepared in a pit (ground oven) (Tu'inukuafe, 2019). Once the food is cooked, everyone is seated around the floor while the meal is distributed by the adults. The space is usually enough to accommodate the family size because the importance of eating together is vital within Tongan traditions.

Just like how Suliana had expressed her wishes for a bigger kitchen, it relates to other Tongans who are currently living in Aotearoa. The kitchen is not just a space for people to eat in but it's a space to build relationships, host important guests and also come together for quality time. While observing the way Tongans People live in Aotearoa, if the kitchen is too small, the preparation of the food is usually outside where there's space to carry out these processes. For example, preparations for a wedding, graduation or funeral can be quite difficult when the kitchen space is too small to host important guests. As such, it is more likely to hire a tent for the outdoor so that preparation of food is carried out in an open space and for people to move around during this process.

Figure 1

Suliana in her happy place

This photo was captured of Suliana in her kitchen preparing food for her family. The kitchen is one of Suliana's happiest places because she finds joy in cooking especially for her children. Fulfilling other roles as a mother throughout the day, Suliana always ensures to prepare dinner before her children arrive home from school and work. Suliana had explained that the reason why she was the one to prepare food was to be able to use the ingredients wisely and enough to last their shopping for the week. Considering Suliana's family size she has mastered how to distribute these ingredients and plan out dishes that will not require too many ingredients to be added in. This can be tiring for a mother who is trying to meet all other necessities but also having to prepare a meal that is enough for her children. Additionally, the photos provide a glimpse of the kitchen space that is given for Suliana to cook. This is considered to be too small because it's only enough for her to prepare everything and ensure no one is around for safety reasons.

Precarity does not only revolve around employment insecurity but it also interrupts the *va* between family dynamics. This kitchen space emphasises one of the many issues precariat families face is the inability to cook together as a family. For example, in Tonga, cooking is done communally in a kitchen that is usually outside. Every helping hand is welcome to help and relationships between relatives are strengthened in the process of preparation. This is helpful for anyone who may have had a long day from work or school as they wind down from their day, they come together and prepare the meal. However, Suliana is unable to have this type of experience with her children due to the confined space that's given within her kitchen. Moreover, precarity does not only impact the *va* between family dynamics but also affect cultural ways of being as a Tongan. Cooking communally is often seen in Tongan homes but with the space that's available in Suliana's home, she may not be able to host people in gatherings or have her children help her. Thus, this may influence the way Tongan families like Suliana prepare their food in a traditional way rather adopting other ways of preparation to be conducted in doors and space may only allow for one person to take charge of this responsibility.

Important cultural practices for bringing family together and sharing collective responsibilities are disrupted. The precarity specific to migrant and diasporic communities requires us to acknowledge that cultural rights are integral to human rights (Standing, 2014). Cultural rights ensure that diverse communities and peoples could access and participate in their chosen culture, including language; cultural and artistic production; participation in cultural life; cultural heritage; intellectual property rights; author's rights; and access to culture, among others. These rights also should be afforded in conditions of equality, dignity, and non-discrimination.

Figure 2

A land to cultivate food for Suliana's household

Land or *fonua* can be described as country, tradition, heritage, placenta or the afterbirth of a newborn (Fehoko et al.,2021). However, in this particular context, Suliana had shared the importance of land both living in Tonga and here in Aotearoa. She expresses how she's fortunate with having a bit of land as she compared it to the past Housing New Zealand home where there was not that much space outside. Sperl, (2018) reported how Tongan culture greatly revolved around agricultural and land cultivation practices as well as the people's significant spiritual relationship to the ocean, which yielded food as well as a spiritual focal point that provided both life and soulful energy to the population. This is prevalent for people in Tonga who are living in a rural area or from a lower-class

background. The land and the ocean is their main source of income and alternative ways for survival. Suliana fondly recalls her memories of living off the land by cultivating crops to eat and sell and going into the ocean to get food from there when living in Tonga.

The photo above was something that I took interest in during our *talanoa* with Suliana. She had carried that way of living and continued it here in Aotearoa. When asked why she took this photo she said it's a symbol of her way of being, one of the things she enjoys is planting her crops during summer and waiting for the right time to harvest. This photo was taken around winter and Suliana had shared when it's near summer, the backyard is clean, weeding the area and turning the soil to soften, ready for seeds to be planted. She has learned to plant things like her vegetables, kumara and watermelon. At this point of our *talanoa*, she'd pause and smile as a sign that she has achieved something when it's time to harvest her crops. Suliana shared that when the time comes, she tends to spend less on other things because they eat from what's been harvested and she can only worry about the meat for their daily meals.

Suliana spoke about the joy she experiences when it's harvest season. She would call her siblings and her kids to come to pick up a bag of vegetables or some watermelon even though she has every right to preserve these for her household. From a western perspective, this may seem counter-productive as a struggling household, but the ability to enact cultural practices of care rather than the simply passive recipient of charity provide opportunities for dignity. This speaks to the *tauhi va* between herself and her brother but also within her community and her kainga. As such, when she continues to do this her children are more likely to carry this out but also for the family to help her in time of need. Thus, this is not only a reflection of how land is an important factor but a reflection of Suliana's personality.

Too small for my family size

During our *talanoa* for Suliana, we had talked about her experiences with living in the previous houses that were given to her by the state. Issues around housing, work, income, debt, food and wellbeing are closely interrelated but often treated as isolated topics for policy intervention. The relational impacts of these issues are particularly acute in the everyday lives of precariat mothers in Aotearoa who occupy low-paid and often insecure jobs. Shelter is one of the basic needs for a human being to flourish in an environment. As such having a suitable house is crucial not only to raise children well but for the collective wellbeing of a household. Living in Aotearoa, the condition needs to be well equipped considering the different seasons throughout the years. New Zealand's claim to support the basic human right to a decent home is demonstrated in various international treaty agreements as well as implicitly in various laws and policies (Human Rights Commission, 2017). However, access to housing in Aotearoa is met with barriers, particularly for women and for Pacific Peoples. More people in Auckland rent than in any other region in the country (Malva, 2016) as homeownership is becoming more out of reach than ever, where prices are suggested to be some of the most unaffordable in the OECD (Satherley, 2021). The housing system as it exists today promotes stratification, exclusion and discrimination in ways that can be difficult to detect (Lewis et al., 2020).

Tukuitonga (2013) described that the most prevalent conditions that reflect the socioeconomic circumstances of Pacific families are overcrowding, and damp and cold housing. In Suliana's case, the first house that was given to them was problematic and it had an impact on her second eldest as she was asthmatic. The house consisted of three bedrooms but it did not accommodate her larger family size and there were too many of them living under one roof. Suliana added when wintertime had approached, it was difficult for her as a mother having to watch her daughter go through her asthma attacks while feeling helpless.

She talked about that particular experience where they would transform the lounge for her second eldest to use during this time. The eldest daughter needed more space to breathe and so Suliana had kept the lounge empty to ensure her daughter had room for her to breath and rest there during the night. At this point, I could see Suliana getting emotional as she explained how helpless she felt watching her daughter go in and out of the hospital due to the impact of the house on her daughter's health.

> *"Ko e momoko na'e fu'u momoko 'aupito pea taimi e ni'ihi na'e lahi ange e ngaue 'e Tufui 'a lotofale 'a ia ko e lotofale na'e tu'u pe ai e ki'i hita pea ne ongo'i 'oku ata ange pe ia ki he 'ene ngaue'aki ki he'ene manava mo ta'uataine".*
> *"When it was winter it was really cold, Tufui had to use our lounge because there was a small heater that provided warmth for her but also space for her breathing and to move freely in there".*

The excerpt above speaks to the fear and concern Suliana had for her daughter while discussing these experiences with me during our *talanoa*, she often referred to how exhausting waiting for the call for another Housing New Zealand home to become available as her daughter struggled to breath due to poor insulation. Experiencing many rejections and the waiting list for new homes stretches to thousands of people and families, being in this difficult position, Suliana was on the edge feeling helpless while watching her daughter's condition worsen as their very home sickened her. She would constantly call to see if there were any updates on an available home before the long wait finally came to an end. Suliana was able to move her family to their current house that they are now in. The conditions of this house are much better than their previous one and the space is decent to accommodate her family size.

Sundborn et al., (2006) found Pacific families were more likely to live in damp and cold housing than other ethnic groups, they were more likely to depend on rental accommodation, living in overcrowded circumstances in response to economic hardship and larger families. This finding supports what Suliana had shared and shows that Suliana's experience is not just of hers but for many Pacific families who are living in Aotearoa. For example, the response to economic hardship is living together collectively because the rent is increasing and this may be the solution to share the cost among those living in one household. It is common for Pacific Peoples to live collectively with multi-generations in one household. Being in this position is difficult because the impacts of overcrowding may not be an issue until someone in the household becomes sick. Cater et al., (2005) explained Pacific Peoples to be disadvantaged in the housing sector and it is important to build a clear picture of housing and health that can aid urban and social planning for Pacific Peoples. Since there is a clear relationship between the importance of housing and health, these houses must be affordable and well-conditioned for Pacific Peoples and larger families. It is suggested by research that moving forward or bringing change, there needs to be change in policy and how we can better the future of Pacific Peoples. Thus, this may reduce housing inequities and impacts on health for Pacific Peoples experiencing overcrowding.

Cater et al., (2005) described the lack of housing designs suitable for larger Pacific families and often provides limited options for Pacific People to access a house that accommodate their needs. For example, most of these houses for Pacific Peoples are either too small or too cold and damp. The houses that are well established are too high for Pacific families to afford and so they are left with limited options. Furthermore, Tuatagaloa (2013) reported Pacific Peoples are most likely to face challenges of adapting to and establishing themselves in a new country. These challenges may relate to living conditions, adjusting to the new lifestyle as well as having to learn how to navigate themselves within the system.

When asked about the living conditions at their current house, Suliana appeared to be happier and is more satisfied when reflecting ten years ago when they first migrated to Aotearoa. All Suiliana ever wanted is provide a suitable home for her family and to meet the needs of her family. As previously mentioned, her eldest daughter and family are living there as a response to helping out with the financial side of things. When Suliana was talking about their living condition, it appears to be that her son-in-law is one that they depend on the most due to the security of his employment. Suliana express there is a time when her eldest daughter does not receive any hours from work in that particular week, so she would rely on the money coming from her benefit and also her son in-law's income. Managing the amount of income that is coming into her household is done by Suliana with the help of her eldest daughter.

My Faith as a coping mechanism kept me strong

Faith and Christianity plays a significant role within Tongan society. This influences how we behave and how we perceive the world. In 18000, Christianity had arrived in Tonga and it had a huge impact on structural systems and cultural practices within Tongan society. Tonga is known to be the only Pacific that was never colonised due to the dedication of land by King George Tupou I. This day was when King George Tupou I had taken a handful of soil and raised it to the heavens declaring that his nation and its people now belonged to God and he invoked heavens protection and blessing (Carter, 2012). This led to the constitution stating that land in Tonga could only be given to natural-born Tongans and not sold to outsiders, as is still the case today. The symbolic act of raising soil to the heavens by King George Tupou I changed the lives of every Tongan as Christianity and faith continue to influence our everyday lives. To its extent, the way things are conducted within a Tongan society is based on religion, one's identity revolves around the church they belong to and most of our values were informed by the arrival of Christianity in Tonga.

Metuamate (2019) highlighted Christianity has become a modern identity for Tongan People living in Tonga and across the diaspora. As such, numerous Tongan churches are well established in Aotearoa and for new migrants these churches are critical sites for community support. Within these spaces it allows New Zealand born Tongan's to connect with those practices rooted in Tonga. The traditional ways of being a Tongan can also strengthen the identity of younger generations growing up in Aotearoa – providing continuity and security in identity. Church spaces are often open for children to learn the language and understand the customs that revolve around faith.

Suliana reflected on how her life was heavily influenced by her faith. The way she would structure and create her routine was based around the church and her faith. As a migrant from Tonga, it was clear that despite living in Aotearoa for over a decade, Suliana had maintained a deep reverence and respect for Tongan and Christian ways of being. Often in this particular *talanoa*, Suliana kept referring to the importance of her faith and how it has helped her cope with the stresses of life. It was her faith that allowed her to believe in something that does not exist physically, it was her faith that gave her the strength to endure days where she was unsure if they would have dinner on the table or not.

> *" Ko e uhinga fa'a me'a ko e fa'a ai ki mu'a ko eku moui pau ma'u pe keu mu'omu'a kihe Eiki aki pe mahino kiate au mo eku tui".*
>
> *" I mean before and now within my own life, I will need to put God in everything that I do and that is what I believe in".*

This quote speaks so much about Suliana's character and so would many Tongan mothers would testify to the fact of putting their faith first in everything that you do. For Suliana, her faith is important that she modelled these things to her kids with the hope that

one day if she is no longer here, she has imparted her legacy to her children and grandchildren. She remembered vividly when her husband left her with five children to clothe and put food on the table. Suliana had to work multiple jobs so the income that she was receiving was enough to provide for her family. Suliana had no one to turn to but God.

Although she had kept the faith, there were some challenges she had faced within these churches. These challenges consist of meeting the obligations that was asked within the congregation, having to work more hours to earn extra income to meet these obligations as well as contending with the reality of being a single parent and the judgement by others of her. The fear of getting judged by her family, the fear of humiliating her family if she left her husband was too much for her to handle. She was concerned there would be backlash on her children in school. Suliana had spoken about 'putting on a front', wanting to appear resolute for her children and she did not want them to feel less than other Pacific children in school. Suliana was emotionally torn knowing deep down her husband was unfaithful to her. She would try to save her marriage and allow her husband back to the house because she did not want her children to not have a father. However, despite the many chances she gave him, he continued to be unfaithful and Suliana made the decision to leave her husband. After a while, Suliana had decided to move to another Tongan church and from there she felt belonged and was welcomed by the people who were there. The church gave her space to feel connected to women who had similar struggles and a place where her children can grow and discover more about their culture.

In the image below (see Figure 3), when asked to image those moments that hold meaning to her, Suliana captured this image of her and her grandson spending time together. Suliana had described that this is one of her favourite thing to do is spending time with her grandson but also teaching him more about her faith. As previously mentioned, Suliana's faith is very vital for her so this is one of the things she would do aside from managing

everything in her household. This photo is powerful as it emphasises how Suliana is passing on tools and wisdom to her grandson from a very young age. It shows that despite what their circumstances may look like, there is always hope at the end of the tunnel, whether it will come today or tomorrow, Suliana is optimistic about her future with her little family.

Figure 3

Suliana raising her grandson in the Lords way

Concerning the concept of *tauhi va,* this is common within our Tongan community where the grandchildren would gravitate to their grandparents more so than their parents. Often in some cases, grandparents play an important role as their carer when both parents are working trying to make a living. As such, spending more with grandparents enhances the

ability for teachings and legacy to be passed on to the next generation. With grandparents, they are usually the ones who teach their grandchildren how to pray, the history of Tonga and the core values of our society. This photo speaks to generational strength and continuity despite hardship in Aotearoa. For Suliana, it was important to raise her grandson to know her Savior and be able to teach him these little things for when the time comes and she's not around, he can carry this on. The focus turn to Hingano as he shares his experience with precarity as a pastor and a father living in Aotearoa.

The case of Hingano

In this section, Hingano shares his experience with precarity where he highlighted the following themes that was further discussed. These themes were his experiences when he first migrated in Aotearoa and navigating the system. Hingano also shared a similar experience to Suliana on having to adjust their first home to cater to his family size. While experiencing precarity, Hingano continued to give back and support his family in Tonga. Hingano saw the importance of education and so he shared how education can set a brighter future for his children as well as a pathway out of experiencing precarity.

Hingano's household

The church is one of the most important aspects in my life and I knew embeddedness or membership within the church community would allow me to connect with potential families experiencing in-work poverty who might want to participate in my study. I meet with the elders and pastors in my church and they had approached Hingano to be part of my study. Without hesitation, Hingano agreed to be involved, a phone call was made and from there we agreed to conduct our *talanoas* at his home.

Hingano is 67 years of age and hails from the village of Haveluloto, Tongatapu. He is married to Silia and is the proud father of eight children. In his early life, he had grown up on one of the outer islands of Tonga, Ha'apai. Hingano vividly recalls experiences as a child

where he was sent to mainland Tonga for his education. Education was highly valued by his parents and because at the time in Ha'apai, the education system was not well established, Tonga was the only option for him if he wanted to enter college. This is common amongst families living in the outer islands, they send their children for further education on the main island, Tongatapu. When asked to recall these living experiences, I observed Hingano's body language had shifted and he became anxious. It was then clear that from a very young age and due to limited opportunities living in the outer islands, he was forced to live independently, away from his parents and needed to make some sacrifices for a better future. This would ensure that one day if he did have a family, he had a sufficient income to provide for them as well. Once Hingano had graduated he pursued further studies to gain his diploma in teaching and so he became a teacher in Tonga. As a teacher, it meant that the income he earned was adequate as he started his little family, but it also meant he could support his children well during their early schooling years.

The importance of education stayed with Hingano, and he actively passed on this value to his children and their educational experiences. With limited options and lack of access to various pathways in Tonga, Hingano decided to migrate to Aotearoa in 2003 with his family. Hingano did not want to pursue teaching and so he worked at a carpet company till he suffered a heart attack two years ago. Six out of his eight children have graduated from University and moved out of the home. Currently, Hingano lives with his wife Silia who works as a nurse in Middlemore and his eldest son Viliami who is a teacher. Like many other Pacific Island families that have moved to Aotearoa, they faced many challenges while settling in. These challenges were things like being caught between two worlds, poor housing that could not accommodate a large family size, how the systems such as healthcare and education were not built for Pacific Peoples and how education provides more opportunities for migrants in Aotearoa. Hingano's story provides important insight into those experiences

of precarity for newly arrived migrant families and how they establish a place of security and belonging for themselves on our shores here in Aotearoa.

As part of the photo-production exercise, Hingano asked me to take photos of the images that lined the walls of his home, these he identified as far more important than any images he might take himself. As an older man, he did not feel confident operating his phone camera and I happily obliged. As we walked around his lounge, admiring the walls adorned with the smiling faces of loved ones, he paused at one and asked me to take a photo of the image below (see Figure 4) as a humble reminder of where they had come from.

Figure 4

Hingano and his family in their lounge in Tonga

This photo was of Hingano's family as it was taken in their lounge in Tonga. Hingano had referred to this photo as "*My children are my life and they are the reason for everything that I do".* As we paused there for a while, tears rolled down his face and we continued to move to the next set of photos alighting the walls. This collection of images spoke to the profound effects of feeling on our experiences and understanding of the use of imagery in our homes. There is the tactile nature of photos; the deliberate placement of photos on the wall; the willingness to share bonds of love captured in such imagery for visitors to witness; the relation of photography to sentiment and intimacy; and the ways that affect pervades the photographic archive. As the photo was taken in the lounge, this was a place of gathering for his family where they would spend quality time with each other and had memories that will forever be ingrained in their hearts. The lounge or *'lotofale'* as Hingano would refer to it as was a place where values were taught and homework was done together as part of their daily routine.

The photograph or the collection of photographs I was privileged to view, are more than just a simple visual representation of family. They each carry something of the vital essence of the people they depict. Within this space, I experienced an aspect of photography that is rarely discussed—the networked relations between photographer, the photographed, and the life worlds of the communities involved (Ellis and Robertson 2018). Through the act of taking photographs of the images of Hingano's family within his home, given a permission was granted by him, the concept of *vā* was activated and experienced in that space. Because Hingano had provided a safe space for me to take images of his photos aligning the family home, there were no feelings of disrespectful or dishonoring as he had opened his home for this to take place.

The camera for the photographer then becomes a medium for communicating with the unseen world (Ellis and Robertson 2018). Through such practices of aligning the walls of our homes with images of family, time, space, distance and generations are collapsed and united. Family members who visit their home can see their loved ones represented on the walls, this coming together enables collective memory and healing, giving comfort when living away from Tonga, through enacting rituals alongside more germane moments of connection with family (Nikora and Awekotuku, 2016). Such cultural practices provide important avenues for the strengthening of *vā* between members. Not only do such images taken provide an affirmation of family, but for visitors it also foregrounds returning to the fold of family. The importance of such portrait photography observed in Tongan family homes exemplifies their power and significance which transcend time and space, reconnecting present generations to an umbilical cord of genealogy, history and identity (Schorch and Hakiwai, 2014). For Hingano's this particular image provided the impetus for his decision to move his family to Aotearoa. These faces had convinced Hingano that there was so much more waiting for them in Aotearoa, the land of milk and honey, without realising the difficulties that would await him once he and his family arrived on our shores.

Migrating to Aotearoa: Leaping into the 'unknown'

Chain migration was commonly seen among Pacific Peoples in the past and present days. It differs depending on the circumstances of families but chain migration was a way of allowing people to settle in Aotearoa and wait for families that would migrate later. For example, within some families, it could be one parent that would first migrate to find work and a place for their family. Browne (2006) highlight the ability to find jobs is enhanced when they have relations, friends and local communities in the recipient country. Once things are sorted and is well set up, the rest of the family will usually migrate later to reunite with that parent. Wright and Hornblow (2008) reported that as Pacific Peoples became established

in Aotearoa throughout the 1960s and 1970s, chain migration reunited families as it became a consideration in the migration process, despite economic uncertainty and reduced employment opportunities. Over time, Pacific Peoples engaged with the process of chain migration because it was affordable to do so and allows them to settle in properly in Aotearoa.

Upon first migrating to Aotearoa in 2003, Hingano settled with family who had already lived there. The family they had settled with was Hingano's wife's cousin. Due to his family size, Hingano had talked about the cramped conditions of the first house they lived in which was far too small to accommodate his family size. This was their first house they had lived in when migrating into Aotearoa, one that was shared with another set of family. After three months living there, the couple had decided to move to America and so Hingano and his family had a bit more space for his family. With the property price being at affordable state at the time, Hingano saw an opportunity to purchase the property from the couple, then secure the house next door to them. This was considered as their second property till this day. Goodyear (2017) reported that researchers suggested that housing is increasingly being regarded as a financial asset that can be used, not just an asset to live in. This was relatable to Hingano and his experience because he wanted to at least secure another property for his children in the future. Hingano thought securing the other property was an asset for his family or for his children that may want to continue living with them.

Once the conversation had shifted, Hingano was asked to talk about his experience when they first settled in Aotearoa. At the time, Hingano and his wife were the only ones working so it was a challenging time trying to build their little family. Hingano had found a permanent role with a construction company and his wife worked as a casual nurse in Middlemore hospital. This meant he was the main source of income and the family would

depend on his income because of his type of employment. For his wife, on the other hand, she was given some hours while other weeks, there were no shifts available for her.
Being the main source of income had its demand and pressures. When Hingano was asked to describe these experiences and how they had impacted his wellbeing, we often had to pause in between questions because some of these memories were traumatic and difficult to recollect for Hingano.

Chattier (2019) highlighted for decades, a male-centered view is evident in the Pacific discourses on migration, often attracting men, who were regarded as the main breadwinners to earn money for the household. It emphasizes how men are usually the ones who decide to move abroad for a better lifestyle and this was the reality of Hingano and his household, he had to work more hours to be able to cover all costs in his household. Beyond the cost within the household of Hingano, there are responsibilities that he holds according to his culture and within the community. The role that he plays within the church is crucial and was important that he had fulfilled them too. This had required some sort of financial support to his community and the church which then put more pressure on Hingano at the time. Hingano expressed his dream of a secure life in Aotearoa in the following quote.

> *"Ai ko e tukunga ia condition na'a mau i ai o a'u mai pe hange koia ko e me'atokoni nake ki'i fusi mo'omo mo e ki'i tafa'aki koia i he mau ha'u, uhinga na'e ikai ke iai ha fu'u ma'u pa'anga lelei".*
>
> *"That was the condition at the time, there was a time where we struggled to put food on the table because we did not have a sufficient income to provide for my children".*

Hingano expressed this as he reflected upon their first time moving into Aotearoa. Although he is in a better place now, Hingano does not forsake his humble beginning with his

little family. This quote was expressed by Hingano as he remembered how many struggles he had faced only to put food on the table. When asked to elaborate more, Hingano became emotional as he started explaining the days when he would wake up in the early hours to get his family ready, drop them off at school and then he would leave for work. He added, they only had one car and so it was important that he would find a job that will allow him to start after he had dropped his family to where they needed to be before he starts his shift. That particular construction job Hingano was in, they allowed him to work shifts that were suitable for his family's pick up and drop-offs. If Hingano had of still been living in Tonga, he could have asked for help to share such duties with members of his extended family and he would return the favour later down the line. However, being in Aotearoa, the environment is different and extended families do not usually live close to each other. Fa'avae (2017) highlighted the importance of services to others which is valued within the kāinga (family), Tongan men have responsibilities within the church and the wider community. This is reflected in our *talanoa* with Hingano and the type of man he is, one that does not only fulfil his role as a father but also to his church and the wider community.

Ioane et al., (2017) stated that socioeconomically disadvantaged Pacific families need food, financial help and employment or education assistance in general. This was evident in the second part of his quote Hingano as it alluded to the idea of struggling to provide for basic needs such as food. These realities are not uncommon in Pacific households especially with a family size like Hingano where food can be limited. Rush et al., (2007) highlighted how Pacific Peoples are faced with food insecurity, often purchasing cheaper food due to financial constraints, skipping meals, experiencing hunger and not being able to buy food. Additionally, Hingano had described his experience when he first migrated into Aotearoa where it was difficult for him to provide enough food for his children. This had made things difficult for him where some days he can only afford one meal a day and sometimes the

children's lunch was an additional pressure to take up more hours to be able to provide lunch. Hingano had contrasted their living conditions to Tonga where it may have been easier to provide food through cultivating the land and depending on the ocean for seafood.

In Tonga, food can be shared amongst extended families or neighbours if they know a family is in need. The exchange of sugar or salt enhances the concept of *va* and it reassures each family that they will support one another regardless of their circumstances. For example, making a living is more feasible to do in Tonga if neither of the parents is in paid labour. The majority of Tongan People who are in rural areas, live off their land, harvesting crops when the season is good and selling them in the markets where they can receive some income. However, in Aotearoa, things require a certain standard of income because the cost of living here is not as cheap as it is in the islands. This has emphasised how the idea of neoliberalism is becoming a 'norm' due to colonisation, thus making subsistence living seem impossible. As such it is common that when families migrate into Aotearoa employment for either parent is crucial to make a living. It may take time to get into the work industry, these are one of the top priorities when moving from Tonga. Thus, this is what Hingano had to consider before moving here.

Adjusting the house to fit everyone

Migrating from a home that was able to accommodate your family size to a home that has limited space can be a challenging experience. These challenges may require moving around in a confined space or easily passing on the flu if one receives it in the household. The first house Hingano had moved in with his family was a house shared with another set of family. This house had three rooms and it had a sleep out where Hingano and his family would start from and adjusting the space to ensure everyone could fit. The space was far too small but Hingano was determine to start somewhere with his family before looking for a place on their own. For example, a three-bedroom home may be impossible to cater to the

needs of a family with eight children. However, due to limited means for the parents, rooms were to be shared amongst these siblings and they would try their best to fit everyone under one roof. The rooms can be shared among two to three siblings and often some of these families have their grandparents living with them as well. Although this may seem impossible for some families, this is the harsh reality they face living in Aotearoa.

Schluter et al., (2007) reported how the housing costs in urban Auckland are significantly greater than elsewhere in Aotearoa and so Pacific Peoples are more likely to experience overcrowding. This can be one of the reasons why Pacific families from the Islands start off with living with family first before moving out as the cost seems impossible to live on their own in a foreign land. While living communally allows family to share costs, there are negative impacts that needs to be taken to account. Chapman, et al., (2000) reported how communicable diseases and respiratory diseases have been linked to overcrowded households. From Hingano's experience living in Tonga, houses can be extended without the government's consent and often separated based on gender. For example, the main house is always reserve for the girls and the parents while another house is built for the boys to live there. A common way of living that is evident in Tonga but it also engages with the idea of *tauhi va* between a brother and a sister.

Our *talanoa* with Hingano gave him an opportunity to draw upon his past experiences when they first arrived here. Hingano described some of the challenges he faced with his family when they arrived in Aotearoa, living with another family under the same roof. The challenges he faced as a father and not having the privilege to share meals at dinner time or establishing a daily routine for his children. Shopping became an issue as he could not purchase the basic necessities for his family but also having to keep in mind on buying enough to share with the other set of family that they lived with. The demand would put a strain on having to fulfil that with limited income coming into his family. Moreover, all

rooms were occupied and shared but he understood at the time they were too overcrowded and needed to seek a house that was suitable for his little family. Because Hingano was the only one that was earning, he had to make some sacrifices as well as his family to live within their means because they had limited options. This may often require him to work more shifts and spend less time with his children which may have an impact on their family. The following quote emphasises how Hingano's family had adjusted the house they were living in to fit everyone in it.

> *"Kautama tangata'a na'e nau nofo i lalo fale, ko e carage foki pea ma toki hanga maua fakaloki mo me'a o nofo ai kautama tangata'a kae alu hake tamaiki fefine o nofo heni."*
> *"The boys stayed in the garage and we had to put rooms in there then we had the girls living inside the main house with us."*

The relationship between a brother and sister within a Tongan context is vital to comprehend in a Tongan setting. Low and Marketer, (2015) emphasise how everything is communal, from the preparation of food to sleeping arrangements where brothers and sisters do sleep in the same household but keeping with the culture of sibling separation and engaging how *tauhi vā* play its role in this context. It is a value that is often practised in Tongans and those who are living in the diaspora. In a Tongan household, it is common to have the boys living in a different space while the girls are most likely to live with the parents in the main house. The boys will usually build a hut and transform it into a space with rooms that will cater to the number of people living there. However, in Aotearoa, this can be difficult where you're given a confined space to accommodate your family without considering how many people that will live under that roof.

The garage is often used for the house if the main house does not have enough rooms to separate the boys and girls. Prescott (2008) describes this practice as the *faka'apa'apa* or respect between a brother or sister where discussion and humor of a sexual nature including swearing is avoided as a mark of respect. However, those who are born in the diaspora may not engage in these traditions because of the influence of their environment and the western lifestyle. Moreover, *vā* is one of the fundamental values in Tongan society, it influences the way people behave and how they perceive the world (Ka'ili, 2005). This is evident between the *vā* of a brother and a sister living in a household. As such, the girls are usually with the parents in the main house while the boys build a hut for themselves outside. This allows the concept of *vā* to be upheld and also space for everyone in the house. Most houses in Aotearoa are built according to a nuclear family of two to three children which may not be the case for most Pacific Peoples. This may create problems for Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa because of the way Pacific Peoples differ from Western lifestyle and this will require space within the house or even a yard when there's an occasion.

For those living in Tonga, it is a common practice that is evident between a brother and sister to not stay under the same roof or engage in a conversation that may not be appropriate. Considering the situation of Hingano's family, the idea of separating the boys from the girls is not uncommon. It is evident that despite living in a Western country, Hingano continues to uphold these values through his children. Imagining the living conditions for Hingano's boys the garage may not be in a good condition to live in but due to their limited means, they had to adjust the house to be appropriate for living with their Tongan worldview.

While this is important to practice and uphold these Tongan values, some garages can be really cold during winter time for people to live in. According to Oliver et al.,(2017) they reported how Pacific and Maori experience household crowding more than any other ethnic

group and this may be associated with other factors such as bed-sharing, age composition of the household and other features of deprivation. Evidently shown how there needs to be improvement with the building standards of the house in Aotearoa, ensuring to provide warmth for people to live in and avoid any impacts they may face on their health. Furthermore, Stats New Zealand (2016) highlighted Pacific Peoples are more likely to face major problems with cold and dampness than any other ethnic group in Aotearoa.

In relation to Hingano's case, having his boys to live in a garage may impact their health in a way that they may need further assistance to access the health service. Asher and John (2016) how living in unhealthy housing, stress and diseases flourish and children are often found to live in garages, cars and some are homeless. In Hingano's case, the garage seems to be the only option that was available for his sons to live in and so despite the garage being cold and moldy this was the only place for his sons. As a result, it may have been difficult for a father to watch but it gave Hingano more determination to work harder and be wise about their income coming into their household, so they are able either extend or purchase another property for their children.

Giving back to family living in the Islands

People that live in the Islands often believe or perceive Pacific Peoples living in Aotearoa as being better off than themselves in terms of financial or being secure in their living conditions (Gershon, 2007). Often families from the islands will call to ask for support but they do not understand that living in Aotearoa can be difficult. For example, if there's a funeral or a birthday that is happening on their island, families usually call those overseas to ask for help whether this is through money or materials needed for the occasion. For some families, this may not be an issue to send things back to their families in the Islands but for other families, this may be seen as a burden as they struggle to meet rising living costs on low incomes. Even though Pacific Peoples are more likely to be living in a precariat state when

families from their homeland ask for things it may be seen as an obligation to provide for them regardless of their living circumstances in Aotearoa.

Cowley et al., (2004) reported that social and economic roles of traditional gift-giving are both in monetary terms and in-kind, where relatives send goods not only to the family but to churches, educational support and village specific causes. Through the role of traditional gift-giving it maintains a connection to families in Tonga, but it also benefits the economy as well Tonga (Lee,2004). This is common in Tonga where families in the diaspora send things such as food, resources or money to support families in the islands. Sending things back to the islands maintain a connection between families and upholds one of our values as tauhi *vā* within the older and the younger generation. However, on the other hand, when people from overseas family return to the islands, these families remember how they supported them and open their homes and host them.

As Hingano described his circumstance at the time, it was difficult having to provide for his family here in Aotearoa but he had a duty to care for his sister who lived in Tonga. This is common within the Tongan culture as brothers continue to care for their sisters regardless of whether they are married or not. Hingano felt that this was his duty to continuously look after his sister in Tonga and it also allowed him to maintain his connection to his homeland. Lee (2007) reported some may see their contributions to the family at home as a form of investment, either through maintaining land rights, personal investment in income-generating ventures or even to prepare for retirement in Tonga. It is common to see the older generation returning to their home country for retirement while their children continue to live overseas. This is often because the older generation still considers their homeland as their home even when living for many decades overseas. Other reasons may relate to its affordability as it may seem cheaper to retire in their home country as they could

live off their land while their children can support them from overseas. In following excerpt Hingano described his contribution to the lifeblood of Tonga:

> *" Io ko Tonga pe, 'i he'eku ki'i me'a 'oku ou ma'u 'oku ou fa'a tokoni pe ki Tonga ki ho'oku sister 'oku kei 'i ai."*
> *"Yeah Tonga, I will help out with things there because my sister is still living there".*

Acts of services such as sending money back to his sister will help with supporting school fees, bills and other costs that need to be covered. Remittances are critical when recovering from natural disasters in the Islands, such as the 2022 eruption and tsunami in Tonga. As Pairama and De (2018) contend remittances play an important role in people's effort to cope or recover from a disaster in their islands. With Tonga and its high chances of natural disasters occurring every year, remittances play a vital part in helping families that are vulnerable through providing food or goods to help secure their homes. However, people in the islands reciprocate by sending gifts to family overseas such as fine mats, traditional foods or preserved seafood. Often within our culture, when there is an upcoming occasion, it is common to contact families in Tonga to send over food like taro, yum or kumara. As such, it upholds the idea of reciprocity and strengthens the bond between families. Thus, the *vā* between a brother and sister is reflected in this quote where Hingano continues to support and send things over without having to be told so.

Setting a brighter future through Education

Despite the importance of education and what it provides, there are some challenges people may face within the system. With parents migrating into Aotearoa for a better education for their children, the system was not built for Pacific Peoples. Within the schooling system, Pacific Peoples face discrimination, marginalisation and racism (Samu,

2010). Samu (2010) emphasises that educating young Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa should not require them to assimilate or submit to any form of cultural identity erasure. The education system is predominantly grounded in Western ideology, it is important to consider the way Pacific Peoples learn so that the support that is needed for them is given. For example, those that migrated from their home country speak minimal English or no English at all and so these children need take time to learn the language and the lifestyle as well as how to navigate their way through the education system.

Further, many Pacific Peoples are unable to finish their studies because they need to find work to support their families to meet rising living costs. This is usually the case for the eldest child who may need to put their dreams of pursuing further studies aside to find a job that could help out with the bills in their household. Vries (2009) showed that those who migrated from the Pacific tend to do better in the education system than Pacific Peoples who were born here. For Pacific Peoples that wanted to further their education but faced with limited options in the Islands, they often take every opportunity they can when they move into countries such as Aotearoa or Australia to further their studies. Growing up in the Islands, education was highly valued and encourage among the youth and teachings were strict when imparting knowledge to children. As a former teacher, Hingano had always valued education and so this value was always upheld in his household. Hingano talked about the first few years of migrating into Aotearoa with minimal English, he had to navigate the system for his children. For Hingano it was important to ensure his children had the support they need to navigate through the education system:

> *" It is a must ka ko e ako kuo pau ke fou ai 'a e tokotaha kotoa ai 'eku fanau pea ko eku fanga mokopuna me'a tatau pe 'oku ou hanga pe o encourage 'eku fanau ke nau fai 'a e me'a tatau pe pea 'oku nau 'osi ilo pe 'enau tolu".*

" It is a must for everyone to pursue their studies as well as my grandchildren as I try to encourage them to pursue education".

This quote alludes to the idea of education as a way out of precarity for families. As a proud Tongan father who had migrated into Aotearoa for better education for his children, six of his eight children have graduated from University and are currently working in their field of interest. According to Samu (2010), education is often perceived by Pacific families as a means to maintain their family's status and financial security. Considering Hingano's situation now, he is at an age where his children are old enough to take over the mortgage and other bills in the house. During our talanoa, Hingano would often refer to how he would reflect upon how much his life had changed when comparing the present to ten years ago, life had been hard and he struggled so much as a father but now, he and his family were in a much better position. When Hingano's eldest child had graduated, he recalls the graduation ceremony day vividly as he could not hold his emotions back when his son had walked onto the stage as it was one of his brightest dreams being fulfilled. Hingano continued to explain how it had been worth all of the sacrifices he had made in the past in moving his family across the shores of uncertainty had not been a mistake. This resonates with many Pacific parents' dream to see their children pursue education so that they are well set up for their future. For example, parents who see their children pursue tertiary education ensures that they will not go through the same struggle the parents went through when they first migrate to Aotearoa.

Although there is a positive impact on pursuing education, it is also important to consider those who are trying to maintain that reputation within the family. When an individual is known to pursue further education, they are more likely to be under pressure to maintain and uphold that reputation within their family. Because there are very few Pacific

individuals that continue to tertiary studies, if people hear or find out that one is choosing to study further, there are unspoken expectations that people usually have upon the individual. The pressure comes with high standards to maintain this because it is not just about the individual studying, the individual carries the name of their parents and their community. In some cases, Pacific individuals who fail to maintain these standards often face numerous breakdowns along the way because the pressure can be too much to handle. When they end up failing, some individuals avoid sharing this with family because they do not want to disappoint them and also disgrace their family. The increase of likelihood with individuals experiencing suicide ideation is more likely to occur because they often isolate themselves from their networks. As such, some of them would rather face these failures alone rather than allow themselves to grieve and have to for themselves to process things along the way. Thus, these things such as failures in education must be talked about in a space individual are comfortable to share within.

Education has always been essential within the Tongan community and often in some cases, education was perceived as the only pathway out from poverty. Education was one of the reasons why most Pacific Peoples had migrated to Aotearoa, it was to give their children the opportunity to further their education and have more options as their pathway in the future. Ofanoa et al., (2016) highlighted people that who had migrated here was to increase educational opportunities and for their children to be educated in Aotearoa. As such, some of these parents understand what it is like to have minimal education and so they would try their best to provide the best future for their children. Parents that initially migrated to Aotearoa with no qualification were more likely to be in factory jobs where they had to work long hours, either in the cold working environment or out in the heat just to send their children to school.

Marriott and Sim (2015) show education is one of the most well-known keys to success and it is also linked to positive outcomes such as high income, greater employment opportunities and positive health associations. Encouraging Pacific Peoples to pursue education may help better set them up for the future and to be able to work in the jobs where they prefer to be. In Tonga, children that are most likely to pursue further education are from middle-class backgrounds because they can afford it and also have their networks in Tonga that allow them to pursue their educational goals. For those from working-class families in Tonga, they are more disadvantaged because they are unable to afford and send their children to school. Some families rely on scholarships through the schools and these scholarships may be an opportunity for the individual to pursue further education. The majority of these scholarships are overseas and most of these individuals are willing to make the sacrifice and take on these scholarships. Often some of these students lived away from their homes, being separated from their families for over three years to complete their studies. However, for those who do not receive any scholarships or opportunities to study abroad, they stay behind to cultivate the land. With this situation, it may be suitable and will provide enough food for families as they live off their land.

Figure 5

A family photo taken in Hingano's Aotearoa home

Figure 5 is a more recent photo that captures home for the family here in the present in Aotearoa. This photo is of his whole family and of eight children, six of them had graduated. When Hingano was asked why he had picked this photo, he shared that it gives him a sense of accomplishment having migrated across the shores for their children's education and what they had achieved as a family. As a father, he felt he had fulfilled that vision when his children graduated and the reverberations this will have down through each successive generation, providing a brighter future for his grandchildren. In this photo, some of his children are already married and he is now retired. Most of the bills and mortgage are

now covered by his children because they did not want Hingano to go back after he had suffered a heart attack.

Chapter summary

Gradually over the years, a substantial body of research conducted by Pacific researchers has begun to emerge. This study has emphasised how Tongan families face these daily challenges while living in a western world. Despite the living conditions at home, being exploited in the workforce, Suliana and Hingano somehow found the courage to remain hopeful and focus on goals they had set to achieve here in Aotearoa. An example of this was shown in Suliana's story when she talked about her planation at her backyard with a photo that she had taken as one of her significant places. In her little planation, it consists of watermelon and other vegetables that she had planted. Once its harvest season she would call her extended families to pick up some even though she has the choice to preserve this food for her family, Suliana extends her generosity. This is also relevant to Hingano's story where he had shared about sending things to his sister in Tonga even though he had a family that was dependent on him, Hingano upheld his duty as a brother to a sister. Both experiences emphasise the concept of *tauhi vaha'a* between families regardless of their circumstances. As this value is one of the core values of Tongan community, regardless of your situation or social class you belong to in society, Tongan People continues to practice this value in contemporary society. These practices are present in Tonga where you extend your generosity beyond the four walls of your house and to your neighbours that are surrounding you. For example, it can be seen through the sharing of food or material things that would help support that particular family, just like how Suliana has continue to do while living away from Tonga. However, for Hingano's example of sending money back to her sister, this is a common practice that is also present in our culture. By sending money back home to his

sister, it maintains a strong relationship between themselves but also strengthen the vā between their families, especially for their kids to learn and engage with their tradition.

One of the significant things that was observe from both case study was how connected these participants were to their culture and their church community despite living in Aotearoa for over ten years. With the historical event that had taken place in Tonga and the impact of Christianity, majority of our ways of being in our community is heavily involved with the church. Suliana had mentioned in her sharing that when she is faced with multiple challenges in life, her faith is her coping mechanism, and this is something that has helped her cope through a divorce and other challenges she faces in life. With the influence of church and how its embedded in daily life in a Tongan community it influences the way they perceive the world that we live in today. For elder generation, being consumed in this world is something they do not value because their thoughts and hope is a home that awaits them on the other side. As such, this is one of the things where Suliana has emphasised in her story is that she is satisfied with what she has, a roof over their heads and food on the table. Whereas for Hingano, as one of the pastors at church, he shared how important it was for his services to the church and it was passed on to his children. Hingano had emphasise that education and church are interconnected where one cannot go with the other and he testify to it through the lives of his children.

From experience and as a Tongan girl growing up, you see families who are living in a precariat state yet when there is a church function or anything that requires money or any type of contribution, they would try their best to present what they have. Some of these families would often create Tongan crafts and sell at the markets while others may go fishing so they are able to have something to sell. Moreover, it's through our faith and the church that unifies everyone in the Tongan community. As we perceive God as the sovereign one, everyone under him is equal and this is demonstrated with the way we live and how we relate

to each. As such, for any individual who may be struggling with precarity or do not have enough food on their table, everyone in the church often lends a hand to help with that particular family. Thus, these are the things Tongan People do when they need to earn some sort of income to be able to fulfil their responsibility to their individual denomination.

Chapter 4

Discussion

The study sought to understand the experiences of Tongan families living in precarity in Aotearoa and how this impacted their lives daily. Through a four-stage enhanced interviewing process, two Tongan households were engaged in discussions around their experiences in the workforce, their awareness of past or present policies and their wellbeing in their everyday lives. To unpack the multi-layered impacts of precarity for Tongan families it was vital that participating household had the space and were afforded the dignity to convey their experiences through *talanoa* sessions. It was important to understand why having a job or multiple jobs was not enough to meet precariat family's basic needs. Thus, considering these various insecurities impact on the lives of these precariat Tongan families, it is important to have an effective response and explore how various initiatives ease the pressures of living in precarity.

In chapter one, I opened with brief definitions of precarity, I then describe who Pacific Peoples are and the story of their migration to Aotearoa and outlining one of the memorable historical events that had taken place and impacted Pacific communities. Following from this, was looking at how Pacific Peoples would define precarity and looking at examples that may contribute to the experience of precarity. Some of these examples were the impacts of overcrowding, the issues of housing and income, employment, and unemployment as well as the relevance of neoliberalism to employment in Aotearoa. The focus then shifted to gendered experiences in the employment. Additionally, I talked about the importance of education as it may change an individual's circumstance which can potentially provide ways out of precarity. To conclude this chapter, I looked at Pacific values and wellbeing considering there are some critiques of western views on wellbeing prior to presenting the aim of the study.

The second chapter focuses on utilising a Pacific framework into this thesis and how it will unfold in a research context in relation to the experiences of Tongan families living with precarity. One of these Pacific methodology that I drew upon was *Kakala*. For this research, *Kakala* is a framework that provides an opportunity to conceptualise these experiences from a Tongan perspective (Johansson Fua, 2014). The process of *Kakala* is grounded in Tongan values. To elaborate, the process of *Kakala* in a research context was discussed and its relevance to Tongan society. Each stage of the *Kakala* process played a significant role and its contribution to how *talanoa* sessions were conducted with households. *Talanoa* was used in this research as it was to allow for informal discussions to be held and for the families to freely share their experience. As such understanding the social structure in Tongan community and the role of a research was important as it sets the direction of where the *talanoa* is taking. The focus then shifts to photo elicitation, one that is rarely used in Pacific research yet was fortunate enough to in cooperate into this thesis. For example, in a photo that was captured by the participants, they would describe the photo with multiple memories that may not only connect to that photo but other photos that was taken by them. Some of the photos were a reminder of how they arrived in Aotearoa as they reflected on how things were challenging at the time having to make ends meet on a daily. These photos had consisted of their children celebrating their success and other photos were a reminder of the humble beginnings when they arrived in Aotearoa.

In chapter three, it opens with the story of Suliana and her experience with precarity. A single mother raising five children on her own as well as navigating the systems of Aotearoa had made it incredible difficult, yet her story was a symbolic reflection of resilient and determination. While being in the midst of filing for divorce and knowing she will fulfil both roles as a parent, Suliana was content with what she had at the time, ensuring her children would not see her in at her lowest. Subsequently, Suliana had shared about her

experience in the workforce, preserving food to last for her family, the condition of the house and her faith as a coping mechanism. Her silent prayers gave her courage to be optimistic about the future of her family and the hope of sharing her stories was to encourage single mothers who may be going through the same experience.

The focus then changed to Hingano as shared his experiences of precarity as a new migrant when first moving to Aotearoa. It is rare for Tongan men to take part in a research study but Hingano has helped normalise the voices of Tongan men who might be going through the same experience as he did with his family. A father of eight children and having to raise them in a foreign country required him to persevere. Hingano's perseverance was developed through sacrifices where he had to change between jobs that will accommodate his family's needs. Some of these sacrifices had required him to be in spaces that were unknown to him or it required him to step out of his comfort zone to enable him to learn and make a living. The first part of his story he had talked about 'leaping into the unknown which covered aspects of adjusting to their new lifestyle and having to adjust to different routines among his household. Hingano moves onto talking about the conditions of his home, supporting his family in the Islands and how he saw education was a way out of poverty or a more secure lifestyle. As a father he felt as if one of his greatest aspirations had been fulfilled when his children graduated from tertiary studies and were not limited to working in factory jobs in contrast to his first job in Aotearoa. Thus, Hingano does not fail to remind his children of their humble beginnings and early struggles as this was a stepping stone for them to grow and do better for their children's future.

Chapter four will provide an overall summary for each chapter then look at the differences and similarities of how both households experience precarity. This will take into account by explaining their experience in relation to Tongan families, considering if the findings were consistent with the literature. Furthermore, it will provide an explanation on

how these findings could contribute to Tongan families experiencing precarity and what is missing in literature concerning the idea of precarity. The hope of talking about these stories is provide a space for Tongan People to share and more so for effective response from government to help those that are in these situations.

Experiences in the workforce

A common perception of migrating to Aotearoa revolves around employment and how Aotearoa was often described as the land of milk and honey (Crawford, 2011). Subsequently talking with these two households it was clear that employment was one of the reasons why they had to migrate here. Without knowing what to expect, they had faced barriers in the work force and which it had an impact on their wellbeing. Bisley (2008) found the rate of unemployment within Pacific Peoples communities may reflect their lack of English literacy or numeracy skills which may prevent Pacific Peoples to seek further help from management level. This was consistent with our engagements with Suliana and her experiences in the workforce in contrast to the experiences of what Hingano had shared. As an immigrant working in a foreign country, it becomes difficult to voice your opinion or speak up about issues you are experiencing at work due to the fear of losing your job. As such, the victim often finds a way to cope with these stresses and added pressure to perform their best without any complaints in the workforce. In contrast to Hingano, he had shared the difficulties of having to change occupations from being a teacher to low-paid work that was classified as hard labour which later impacted his health. Hingano had to find another job that would better suit the lifestyle of his family, dropping the children off at school and his wife to work because they only had one car at the time. Additionally, the added pressure of meeting other commitments in the community through service required Hingano to take up extra work hours to meet these cultural and community responsibilities.

Carrying the pressures of life can be tiring

Having the income of two and sharing raising the children together puts an ease on the individual rather than carrying the load on their own. A difference that was evident between both case studies was how Hingano had his wife to support him while Suliana was single parent raising her family on her own. According to Collings et al., (2014) reported that in many countries, including Aotearoa, single parents report poorer mental health than partnered parents. This was relevant to Suliana and her story where she was the only one providing and carrying for children. Without her husband and children were so young, Suliana knew she will struggle to provide for her family, yet she was determined to work multiple jobs, longer hours to put food on the table and clothe her children. Some days were hard for Suliana because bills were due to pay and so that became a priority which resulted in limited access to food. The impacts this would take on Suliana mental health may have been plausible, but through her silent prayers gave her hope that better days were coming. For a mother like Suliana, she found a way to cope without her husband, but she would not show any signs of breakdown to her children as this was her way of protecting them from worrying about their circumstance. However, in Hingano's case, he had his wife to share the workload and the pressures of life. Lamb and Lewis (2010) reported the involvement of a present parents buffers the educational achievements in adult life for their daughters and protects sons in impoverished families from homelessness in adulthood. As such, the influence of being a present parent can easily enhance and build the character of an individual which can also influence every aspect of their lives. This was shown in Hingano's case where although he was a father that had to work to be able to provide for his family, as a former teacher he made sure to stay involved in his children's life by attending training sessions and helping them with their homework. Thus, majority of his children had graduated and are working to provide for their individual family.

Impacts of living in a small house

Suliana's case study

In Suliana's case, her first Housing New Zealand home was too small, poorly insulated and there was not enough space for her family. Pene et al., (2009) illustrated that living in a small space increases the likelihood of close-contact infections and reduced socialisation and family within the household. As such this relevant to what Suliana had shared in her experience within living in small spaces and how it had impacted the wellbeing of their family on a daily. Suliana had discussed how dinner time was considered as the only time everyone was home at the same time and was present for but due to the size of her kitchen, they struggled to share meals together as a family. Furthermore, Butler et al., (2003) reported how Pacific People were more likely to have symptoms of asthma, cold and flu due to their living condition. Again, this was consistent when Suliana had shared about her daughter and her asthma. From her story, it shows that precarity is not only about feeling insecure or uncertain about the present, but it also highlights other contributing factors to health inequalities among Tonga household.

Hingano's case study

In Hingano's case, he shared about his experience while having to raise his children in a small house and even when they had moved out, the house was still small. This shows how the homes are only built to fit a nuclear family. Housing in Aotearoa for Pacific families has always been a problem due to size and poor conditions. To hear Hingano share his experience opens a dialogue as to how we can think of a potential solution to resolve this problem. It may provide feedback to the government with ongoing development and hopefully contribute to future houses that are built for Pacific families who are living in Auckland. The hope is not only for houses to be in decent sizes that may accommodate Pacific families but also for with a suitable condition that provides warmth when its winter to maximise any health

complexities. Marriott and Sim (2015) reported how there has been increasing inequalities that are entrenched in historic intergenerational disparities of wealth and inheritance which can be a concern about health inequalities.

Importance of engaging with their church and community

One of the things that was similar from Hingano and Suliana's story was how they were fully immersed in and connected to their culture and community. These were things like being connected to people within the community, fulfilling their responsibilities in the church and their family back in Tonga. Manuela and Sibley (2012) suggest how religion and culture are linked in many Pacific studies and it can be difficult to separate the two. This was consistent with both families as Hingano and Suliana shared this experience in their stories. From a Tongan worldview and as a student who grew up in this community, it is important to maintain and keep connected to our community. One of the importance of being connected to a community is that it becomes a support system when things are not going well. As a collective group in Aotearoa, it provides an opportunity for younger generations to learn from older generations about the culture and ways of being as a Tongan individual. Evidently shown in both case studies, precarity impacts a family collectively and it affects difference dynamics of their lives. For example, Suliana shared how facing precarity was difficult yet she would continue to extend her generosity of her plantation to extended families who needed food. Moreover, Hingano had the same experience with maintaining his connections to the church and being involve in his church. The benefits of being connected to a community or part of a church is when things occur within the family, such as funeral, graduation or weddings, the support system is able to help out with anything that is needed within that particular family. Thus, it often eases the pressure in the particular family that is experiencing precarity.

What's missing from the precarity literature?

There is limited research of Pacific People experiencing precarity but there seems to be no research that focuses on the wellbeing of Tongan People experiencing precarity and living in Aotearoa. The voices of these families are important to be heard as it could suggest on what can be done for future programs or services that focuses on Tongan People. Exploring this particular topic emphasises the impacts of precarity amongst Tongan households and how it can affect their daily lives.

One of the things that was missing from precarity literature is how the experience of precarity can disrupt a family system and its cultural ways of being. For example, having to arrange the house to be able to fit a large family. This could relate to things like using the garage so the boys can live there while the girls could fit in the main house with the parents. Some of these experiences are not explored in literature as well as looking at ways on improving the conditions of these houses. Furthermore, the cultural aspect of things is not explored in literature in relation to idea of precarity. This is evident with the concept of respect or *faka'apa'apa* in a Tongan tradition. We can see this when Hingano had shared his experience with his children.

While reflecting on the strengths of the stories that's been provided by two households, being able to persevere through these hardships signify the humble beginnings of Tongan People arriving on the shores of Aotearoa. As we learn from both Hingano and Suliana, these houses were not at a good state, one that impacted their children's wellbeing, yet they had to cope through this because they only had limited resources for themselves. These stories have brought to light these living experiences as starting point to dialogue these issues without feeling the shame of struggling behind doors. It highlights the need of having programs and initiatives that may benefit not only Tongan People in Aotearoa but also for Pacific families who are experiencing similar issues. Emphasising the need is vital for future

generation, so they are able to navigate or have tools to face future challenges. Some of these requirements may need Pacific Peoples to deliver these services or programs as well as funding to ensure it reaching Pacific Peoples who are living in precarity. As a result, funding may go towards resources or service that may help these families who are struggling with food or not being able to meet other basic necessities.

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Appendix A

Participant Information Sheet

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

School of Psychology

Massey University

Level 3, North Shore Library Building

229 Dairy Flat Highway

Albany

Auckland 0632

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS

Whānau Forty Research Project

Research Team: Professor Darrin Hodgetts, Professor Stuart Carr, Professor James Lui, Dr Shiloh Groot, Dr Betty Ofe-Grant, Dr Pita King, Mrs Ahnya Martin (PhD student), Lisiua Havili (UOA Masters Student), Angela Yen (UOA Honours Student), Jennifer Sarich (UOA Honours Student)

We are part of a research team led by Massey University and involving staff from the University of Auckland (UOA) and the Auckland University of Technology. This research was funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC Ref ID:20/402). We are interested in hearing from you about your experiences of living on a low income. The four interviews will be carried out by a member of the research team named above.

You are invited to take part in this research and share your experiences and thoughts of navigating life on a low income. Your insights will help us to understand some of the complexities that come with living on a low income in Auckland. In researching these complexities, we aim to provide anonymised information to policy makers in the hope of enhancing efforts to address issues of in work hardship and to promote wellbeing.

Rights as a participant

Your participation in this study is voluntary and it is confidential**.** The information will be shared between yourself and the research team. We will ensure that the principles of confidentiality are maintained. We will not share any information about what we discuss in the interviews in any way that would identify you to anyone. You do not have to talk about anything that you do not want to.

What this study involves

You will be invited to participate in four interviews over a 1 to 3 months period. These interviews will take place at a mutually agreed location. Before we begin with the first interview we will require you to sign a consent form.

You will be asked questions about work, life on a low income, housing, and wellbeing. We are particularly interested in how you make do or manage on a low income. We will also discuss how recent changes to the minimum wage, welfare (WINZ) supports and related policies, such as working for families have or have not affected your household. In addition, we would like to discuss issues around your free time and what you and your whānau (household) do for enjoyment and relaxation.

Each interview will take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. Each interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed into a written text. You will be provided with kai for each interview and a $50 MTA petrol voucher for participating in each interview.

Eligibility: You can participate in this study if you:

- Are over the age of 18 years
- Reside in Auckland
- Are or have recently been in low paid work
- Earn below the living wage (e.g., less than $22.10 per hour)
- Identify as either Māori, ~~East~~ Asian, Pasifika or Pākehā

Confidentiality and privacy

The information you provide will be kept anonymous in any reports or publications from this research. All interview information will be transferred into electronic data files that will be backed up and stored on a secure University computer. All physical copies of interview transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet in Professor Hodgetts office in the School of Psychology, Massey University.

Confidentiality will always be preserved. Only the researchers named above will have access to any of the research documents.

Risks and Benefits: Participation in this research carries few direct risks to you. Participating in this research will help us to educate policy makers about the complexities that come with life on a low income. Insights from the research in general will also be used to inform public discussions regarding the complexities that come with low income work.

If you wish to participate: Please sign the attached consent form and return it to the research team member with whom you are discussing this form.

If you would like to keep a copy of this information, please keep this in a safe place.

We thank you for the time you have taken to read and consider this invitation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact:

Professor Darrin Hodgetts

School of Psychology, Massey University, Auckland

Email: D.J.Hodgetts@massey.ac.nz

For any concerns regarding ethical issues you may contact

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 21/28. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Fiona Te Momo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800, x 43347, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Approved by the Massey University Human Participants Ethics Committee on 12 May 2021.

Ngā mihinui! Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of this project

Appendix 2

Participant Consent Form

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

School of Psychology

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We would like to invite you to take part in four interviews with one of our interviewers from the research team. We will be asking you to share your experiences regarding work, income, housing, and wellbeing. The four interviews will be audio recorded. They will take place at a mutually agreed location. The interviews will be transcribed by a professional service that is subject to a confidentiality agreement. In order to take part in this research we ask you to sign this consent form.

- I have been informed about this research and understand my participation in it.

- I understand that my participation in the interviews is confidential, will be anonymous and no identifying information can be linked to my responses.
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I can opt out at any stage of the interview process.
- I am aware the information I provide will be used in reports, policy briefs and publications.
- I understand that I can choose not to not answer any particular questions.
- I understand that I can request the audio recorder to be turned off at any time during an interview and any information I have provided to that point can be withdrawn from the research.

I confirm that:

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I understand that anonymised data will be used in published research outputs.
- I understand that information will be stored securely for six years and then deleted.

We encourage you to consider your participation in this study and raise any concern about the study with the research team. Please get in touch with the researchers listed at the bottom of this page if you have any further questions.

Name:_____

Signature:_____

Date: _____

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For any concerns regarding ethical issues you may contact

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 21/28. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Fiona Te Momo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee:Northern,telephone 09 414 0800, x 43347, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Approved by the Massey University Human Participants Ethics Committee on 12 May 2021.

Ngā mihinui! Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of this project

Appendix 3

Fomoou Fakangofua

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
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UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

School of Psychology

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FOMOOU FAKANGOFUA

Kulupu fakatotolo/fekumi: Professor Darrin Hodgetts, Professor Stuart Car, Professor James Lui, Dr Shiloh Groot, Dr Betty Ofe-Grant, Dr Pita King, Mrs Ahnya Martin (PhD Student), Lisiua Havili (Masters Student), Angela Yen (Honours Student), Jennifer Sarich (Honours Student).

‘Oku mau fakafe’i koe keke kau ‘ihe talanoa mo e faka’eke’eke fekau’aki mo e ngāue, tu’unga vāhenga, nofo’anga mo e anga a e moui lelei.

Ko e tamu’a ‘ae talanoa ko eni ko e faka’eke’eke pe ko e ha ha’o fengai/mahino’i mo e ngāue ‘anga, vahenga, nofoanga mei he puleanga mo e fekau’aki ki he moui lelei ‘o e Tonga.

Ko e talanoa ko eni ‘e konga e fā pea ‘e hiki tepi kotoa pē. Vakai ange, ko e talanoá ‘e tipeni pē ha taimi ‘oku ke ‘atāa ai mo e feitu’u ‘oku ke loto ke fai ai e talanoa.

Ki mu'a ke fai e talanoa 'oku mau fiema'u ke faka'ilonga ho hingoa kae toki faka'atā ke kamata e talanoa.

- 'Oku ou mahino'i e taumu'a ae fakatotolo ko eni.
- 'Oku ou mahino'i e fakapuli hoku hingoa pē ko ha ngāhi tali mei he hiki e talanoa ko eni
- 'Oku ou mahino'i ko e kau he talanoa ko eni te u lava p eke ta'ofi ha fa'ahinga taimi pe, pea ko 'eku kaú, 'oku 'ikai ko ha fakamālohi
- 'Oku ou mahino'i ko e ngāhi me'a te u lave ki ai 'e ngaue'aki he lipooti, lau mo e nuispepa
- 'Oku ou mahino'i e tau'ataina 'a 'eku tali pe ta'etali ha fa'ahinga fehu'i
- 'Oku ou mahino'i 'e malava ke tamate'i e tepí he taimi ku lele ai e talanoá, pea moha ngaahi me'a 'oku ou lave kiai 'e to'o mei taumu'a e fakatotolo ko eni
- 'Oku ou tali loto fiemalie keu kau 'i he fakatotolo ko eni
- 'Oku ou mahino'i 'e fakapuli 'eku hingoá, pea 'e ngaue'aki 'eku fakamatala kihe ngaahi lípooti pe nusipepa

'Oku mau fakaloto lahi'i koe i ho kau mai he fakatotolo koeni, keke 'eke ha ngaahi fehu'i mo e kulupu fakatotolo. Kapau e i ai ha'o me'a teke tokanga kiai, pea ke fetu'utaki mai ki ha aha pē he kulupu fakatotolo.

Hingoa: _____ **Fakamo'oni:**_____

'Aho: _____

Appendix 4

Tohi Fakamatala e Talanoa

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TOHI FAKAMATALA E TALANOÁ

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‘Oku mau kau ‘i he kulupu fakatotolo ‘oku taki ‘e he Massey University pea ‘oku kau mai mo e ū ‘univēsiti kehe. Hangē ko e ‘Univēsiti ‘Okalaní, kae pēhē ki AUT. Ko e fakatotolo ko eni, ‘oku fakapa’anga mei he Health Research Council of New Zealand.

Ko e ‘amanaki ‘o e ngāue ko ení, ke mau fanogo meia koe mo e anga ho fe’ao mo e ngaahi vāhenga i Nu’usila. Ko e talanoá, ‘e konga ‘e **fā** pea ko Lisiua tene tataki e talanoa koení, kihe ngaahi fāmili Tonga.

‘Oku mau fakaafe’i koe, keke kau mai ‘o lave kihe anga ho fe’ao moe tu’unga vāhenga kae pehē foki kiha fakakaukau ki he lelei ‘e lava ‘o fai ke tokoni ki he ngaahi fāmili Tonga.

Ko ho’o ngaahi fakamatala’ni ‘e ma’u meia mautolu, ‘e ‘ave ki he ngaahi taki ‘i loto pule’angá, ke nau sio ki ha ngaahi me’a ke fakalelei ai mo’ui e fāmili Tonga.

Ho’o ngaahi totonu:

Ko ho’o kau ‘ihe talanoa fekau’aki mo e taumu’a ‘o e fakatotolo ko ‘eni, ko e me’a tau’atāina pē ia ‘a koe. Pea e fakapuli’i ho’o hinogá ke ‘oua na’a ‘ilo ha taha. Ko e ngaahi tali teke ‘omai e ilo pē e koe pea pehē ki he toenga e kulupu. ‘E ikai te mau vahevahe ha ngaahi me’a fekau’aki pea mo koe, pea ‘oku ‘ikai ke fakamamafa’i keke tali ha me’a ‘oku ‘ikai teke loto kiai.

Koe me’a ekau ihe taumu’a ‘o e fekumi:

‘E fakaafe’i koe keke kau he talanoa he konga ‘e **fā** ‘ihe vaha’e **māhina ‘e taha ki he tolu**. Ko e talanoa ko eni ‘e fai ‘i ha feitu’u mo e taimi teke loto pē kiai. Ko e ū me’a ke fe fai kiai ‘e talanoa ko eni, ‘e pau keke fakamo’oni ho hingoa ki he tohi ke fakahā ‘oku ke loto keke kau mai kihe fakatotolo ko eni.

Ko e ngaahi fehu’i ‘e ‘eke ‘e fekau’aki ia mo e ngāue’angá, tu’unga vāhenga, nofo’anga mo e mo’ui lelei. ‘Oku mau fie’ilo ki he anga ho lava vahevahe lelei ae seniti ‘oku ke ma’u, pē lahi pe si’isi’i ka ko ‘emau fie’ilo pē ‘oku anga fefē ho’o vahe ‘ae seniti koeni ke tofu e me’a kotoa ki ho’o famili. Te tau lave ki he ngaahi lili ki he vaheanga, ngaahi lao fo’ou mo e ngaahi ngaue fekau’aki mo e fāmili ‘oku uesia pē ‘ikai uesia. Te mau faka’eke’eke pe ko e hā hho me’a ‘oku ke fai he taimi ‘oku ‘ikai keke ngāue ai, ko e hā ha’o me’a ‘oku fai ke fakafiefia’i ko e mo ho’o famili.

Ko fakafuofua e lōloa e talanoá mei he houa e 1 ki he 1.5. Kātoa e talanoa, ‘e hiki tepi pea toki taipe ia he komiputá ha’ane ‘osi. ‘E kau mo e **me’a tokoni** ‘i he lolotonga e lele ‘a e talanoá mo e ki’i me’aofa vausia ko e **$50** ‘utu ‘i ho kau mai he taumu’a ‘o e fakatotolo ko eni.

Ngaahi me'a ku totonu keke ma'u ki mu'a pea ke kau he fekumi ko eni:

- 'Oku pau keke ta'u e 18
- 'Oku pau keke nofo 'i 'Okalani
- 'Oku pau keke 'i he ngāue tu'unga vāhenga 'oku 'ikai hoa mo taau ki ho'o fakafuofua
- Ko ho'o tuunga vāhenga 'oku pau keke ma'u lalo ia he $22.10 he houa

Ngaahi me'a teke ongo'i lolotonga e lele 'a e talanoa:

Ko ho'o ngaahi fakamatala fekau'aki mo e ngaahi me'a 'oku mau fekumi kiai, e tokoni ia ke fa'u ha ngaahi lao fekau'aki mo e kakai Pasifika pe kakai Tonga 'oku nau mafasia he feinga ke tohu e sēniti 'oku nau ngāue kiai. Ko e ngaahi fakamatalani, 'e ngaue'aki ke tuku kihe nusipepá ke 'ilo 'e he kakai 'a e ngaahi mafasia 'oku mou fe'ao moa.

Malo 'aupito,
Precariat Research Team